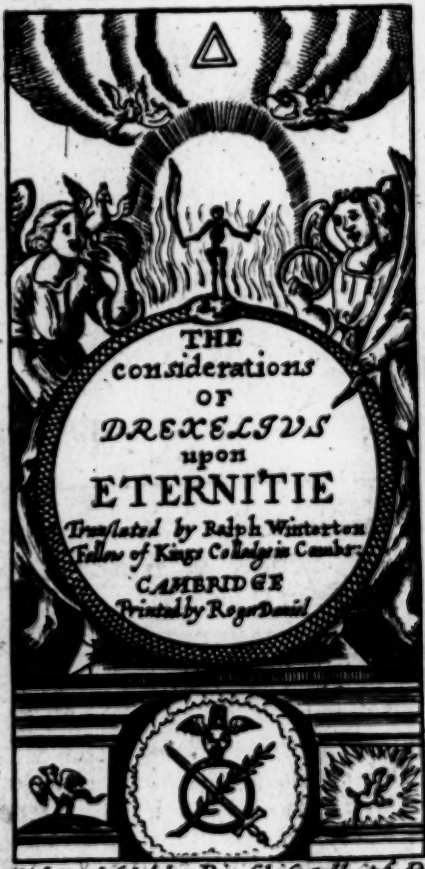
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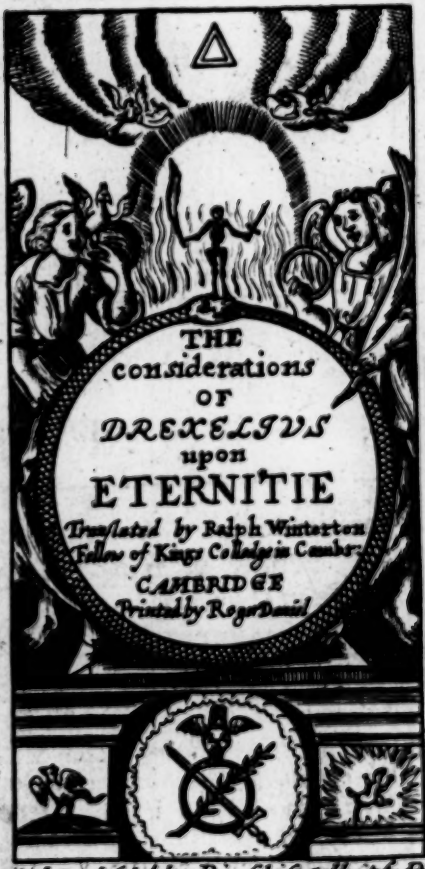
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THE Considerations OF *DREXELIUS* UPON ETERNITY.

Translated by *Ralph Winterton*, Fellow of *King's* College in *Cambridge*, 1632.

LONDON,

Printed for *Rich. Chiswell*, and Sold by *Percivall Gilbourne*, in *Fleet-street*; and *William Davis*, at the *Black Bull* near the *Royal Exchange* in *Cornhil*, 1699.

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To the Right Worſhipful and truly Religious *Eſquire*, Mr. *E. BENLOWES* of *Brent-Hall* in *Eſſex*.

R. W.

Wiſheth Internal, External, and Eternal Happineſs.

IT was well anſwered by him, who being asked, What this life was? *ſaid thus*, It is nothing elſe but the Meditation of Death. *If a Man ſhould ask me*, What time is, *I think I might fitly anſwer thus*, It is nothing elſe but the Meditation of Eternity. *Our* Life *is but a* Poſting unto Death, *and our* Time a ſhort days ſail unto Eternity. *In this* Time *of* Life *we are as* Pilgrims *and* Strangers, *travelling towards our* Cœleſtial Country. *We are as* Sailors, *bound for the* Haven *of* Eternity. *But we muſt* run *through many* troubles *before we can come to our* journeys end: *We muſt* ſail *through* ſalt *and* bitter waters, *and* paſs *through the* Gulf *of* Death, *before we can come to* Land. *There is a Land which is called*, The Land of the Living; *and there is a Land which is called*, Thr Land

of Horror and deſpair: *There is a* twofold Eternity; *either of the* Bleſſed, *or of the* Curſed: *There is a* twofold Life *after* Death; *either in* Eternal Joys, *or* Eternal Puniſhments. *It is good therefore in this* ſhort life, *to think upon that* Life which never ſhall have end: *It is good whilſt we are on our way to think upon our* Journeys end: *It is good in* Time, *whilſt we are ſailing, to have an eye ſtill upon our* Compaſs, *and think upon* Eternity. *To think upon* Eternity, *is a* Soveraign Preſervative *to keep us from falling into* Sin: *To think upon* Eternal Joys, *ſweetens the* ſalt *and bitter* waters *of* Sorrows *and* Affiictions: *To think upon* Eternal Puniſhments, *makes us not to ſet our hearts upon* Temporal Delights *and* Pleaſures. Heaven *is here on* Earth *in part* enjoyed, *whileſt we* raiſe *up our* thoughts *to* meditate *upon it*: *And* Hell *may for ever be eſcaped, if by ſerious and frequent* thoughts *thereof, here in this life, we* deſcend *into it. Such* thoughts *as theſe moved* Drexelius *to write theſe CONSIDERATIONS, and me alſo to tranſlate them. He wrote upon a* general Subject; *and every Man may challenge a* part in it. *What he wrote, he intended for a publick benefit; and ſo did I in the Tranſlation of it. I hope* He *and* His *ſhall find never the worſe entertainment, becauſe* He *is a* Stranger, *and*

come

come from beyond Seas. It is the honour of our Nation to be kind and courteous unto Strangers. *He was commended unto me by a Traveller, a moſt religious and learned Gentleman,* (*Be not angry with me, Mr.* Benlowes, *if I ſay, He was as like you as can be in every reſpect: for indeed he was*) *bred and brought up in the* Romiſh Religion, *and ſent beyond Seas to be confirmed in it, but yet brought home again by divine providence and reſtored to his Mother the* Church *of* England, *for the* Converſion, *I hope, of many, ſingled out of all his kindred to be a moſt* zealous Proteſtant; *born to good* Fortunes, *and yet not given to* Pleaſures, *wedded to his* Books *and* Devotions, *ſpending what ſome call idle time in the beſt Company for the edifying himſelf or others; counting nothing good which he poſſeſſeth, but only that which he doth good withal; taking more care to lay out his money for the good of others, than others in laying up money for themſelves. To conclude, A Gentleman of whom I may moſt truly ſay, That his* Converſation is in Heaven, *his* Diſcourſe on things above, *and his* thoughts *upon* Eternity. *Upon ſuch a man's commendation as this, I could not but take a liking to the party commended, and the more I grew acquainted with him, I liked him. It is the counſel of* Horace.

Tu quem commendes etiam atque etiam aſpice : ne mox
Incutiant aliena tibi commiſſa pudorem.

Believe me, Mr. Benlowes, *I have had ſuch experience of this party, whom here I commend unto you, that I dare confidently ſay, If you entertain him into your ſervice, you ſhall never repent you of it.* Philip *of* Macedon *appointed one every Morning to ſalute him with a* Memento *of* Mortality: Drexelius *his office ſhall be, if you pleaſe, To be your* Remembrancer, *and every Morning, Noon, and Evening, to round you in the ear with a* Memento *of* Eternity. *But I know, that is ſo often in your thoughts, that you need not any to put you in Remembrance of it. Neither yet do I intend here, though I have a fair occaſion, to run over the* Catalogue *of your* Chriſtian Vertues, *ſpecially that part of Chriſtian twins, your* Piety *and* Temperance, *with your* Charity *and* Bounty. *For the firſt, they that daily converſe with you, cannot but ſee how you converſe with them. The other pair go along with you whereſoever you go, and though you deſire to hide them, cannot be concealed; in ſpecial, many poor Schollars,* godly *and* devout Miniſters *in the* Univerſity *and* abroad, *of ſeveral Colledges, have had a feeling themſelves of them, and cannot but make them*

conſpi-

conſpicuous, nay palpable to others. Theſe ſhall praiſe you in your abſence: for my part, I do not love to praiſe a Man to his face. But if the living *hold their peace, the* dead *ſhall riſe up and praiſe you, I mean, thoſe* many *and* excellent Books, *together with other* rare monuments *purchaſed at a great price, which without any ſolicitation at all, out of meer affection you bore to Saint* John's Colledge *in* Cambridge, *where you were ſometimes a* Student, *you have beſtowed on their* Library: *Their* Library, *but the moſt magnificent work, and* Eternal Monument *of the* Mecœnas *of our Age,* John *Lord Biſhop of* Lincoln, *and true lover of Learning, and Patron of Scholars. And now it appears, Mr.* Benlowes, *that you have leſs need of* Drexelius *his ſervice than before. But howſoever, I pray you, entertain him: Let him have but the honour to wear your* Cogniſance, *and both* He *and* I will *put it upon the file of* Thankful Remembrance, *and regiſter it for a ſingular act of your* Beneficence. *Pardon my boldneſs in this: and command me in what liberal ſervice you pleaſe,*

Ralph Winterton.

From King's Coll.
June 1, 1632.

The

The Epiſtle to the

READER.

IF any Man, more curious in cenſuring what is done for a common good, rather than ſtudious himſelf to promote it, ſhould queſtion me for medling in another Man's profeſſion, I might anſwer him in his own kind by way of queſtion, as *Menedemus* in *Terence* anſwered *Chremes* finding fault with him, *Tantumne abs re tua eſt otii tibi, Aliena ut cures, eaque nihil quæ ad te attinent?* Haſt thou ſo much leiſure as to meddle with that which nothing concerns thee?

But to ſatisfie thee (Courteous Reader) who intendeſt, I know, with the *Bee*, to gather *Honey* out of this garden of *Eternity*, and not *Poyſon* with the *Spider*; I hold it fit to acquaint thee with the true occaſion that moved me to tranſlate this book. No *Divine* I am indeed, neither yet can I be if I would never ſo fain: I would I were but worthy the name of a *Phyſician*! But howſoever being deſtinated by the ſtatutes of my private *Colledge* to the ſtudy of *Phyſick*, in the firſt place I thought good to ſpend ſome time in *Arithmetick*, as being a neceſſary inſtrument and help in my *Profeſſion*

fession: In which I made some progress, passing from *Numeration*, *Addition*, *Subtraction*, *Multiplication*, *Division*, *Reduction*, to *the Golden Rule*, or *the Rule of Three*, *The Rule of Falshood*, *the Rule of Proportion*, *and the Rules of Society*, and the rest. But the knowledge of this cost me so dear, that I was forced to leave the study of it. For many nights together I was constrained against my Will to practise *Numeration* oftner than I would, telling the Clock, and could take but little rest. Whereupon I resolved with my self to leave the *Arithmetick School*, and so I went unto the *Physick* and *Musick-Schools*, imploring at one and the same time *Hippocrates* and the *Muses*. For at that time I turned the first book of *Hippocrates* his *Aphorisms* into *Greek* verses, hoping to procure rest by *Physick* and the *Musick* of *Poetical Numbers*; by which I found some rest indeed; (And therefore since, I have well nigh finished at spare hours the other six books; which, if God permit, may ere long see light.) But though I found some rest, yet I did not sleep so soundly as at other times. So I left the *Temple* of *Hippocrates* and the *Muses*, and betook my self unto the *Sanctuary*, to learn of *David* divine *Arithmetick*, which consisteth in the due numbring of the days of this short life, by comparing them with the

the years of *Eternity*: And so I fell upon translating this book of *Eternity*. And this I found by daily experience to be the best *Hypnoticon*, that ever I used; for it brought me to rest better than if I had taken *Diacodion*. Thus I found the old saying true, *where Philosophy ends, there Physick begins*; *and where Physick ends, there Divinity begins*; which I interpret thus (as I found it true by experience: *When Philosophy by accident had done me harm, and Physick could do me little good, I found perfect help in Divinity*. And having found so much good by this book my self, I could not be so envious as not impart it unto others for a *Sovereign Medicine*, to procure quiet sleep. Neither is it good for that only (but far unlike to other medicines, which are only good for some one disease, and falling into unskilful hands oftentimes do more harm than good) it is a *Medicine* fitting all *Ages*, *Complexions*, *Conditions*, *Places*, *Parts*, *Diseases*, *Spiritual*, *and Corporal* whatsoever: It is a *Medicine Preservative*, *Curative*, *Restorative*: It is an *Antidote* against the *Poyson* of sin: It is *Dictamnum* to drive out the fiery *darts* of *Satan*: It is *Catholicon* to purge out all ill humours. It is better than *Exhilarans Galeni*, to chear up the Heart oppressed with *Melancholy*: It is an *Acopon* for all wearines,

an

an *Anodynon* for all Pains, a *Panchreſton* profitable for all things, or *All-good.* It is *Panacea, Hearts-eaſe, All-heal.* It is a *rich Treaſury for Engliſh-men. A ſtore-houſe for the diſeaſed,* and, *The ready way to long Life,* even to bleſſed *Eternity.* Let no Man now challenge me for uſurping another Man's Office, or treſpaſſing upon *Divines.* I cannot ſee but *Divines* and *Phyſicians* may well agree together: Both are buſied about curing of *Diſeaſes,* either *Spiritual* or *Corporal:* And here is a *Medicine* for both. Take it and uſe it, Chriſtian Reader; and thou ſhalt find by thine own Experience that it hath all the Vertues above-mentioned.

So I commend thee to the *Phyſician* both of *Body* and *Soul,* and heartily deſire thy *Temporal* and *Eternal* Health and Welfare.

Ralph Winterton.

From King's *Coll.*
June 1. 1632.

A *Upon*

Upon this Book of Eternity.

TO reach *Eternity* our Thoughts firſt climb
On the ſucceſſive ſteps and ſtairs of *Time*.
And what is *Time?* It is by *Poets* call'd,
And by moſt *Painters* repreſented bald:
But *Poets* and the *Painters* are too bold,
For *Time* was never yet a *Minute* old:
Nor yet, God *Saturn*-like, doth it devour
The iſſue which it breeds: For every hour
Were then a Murderer. But while we ſtrain,
And all created Natures for to gain
Time to their Inch of *Being*; in the ſtrife
They quite burn out the *Taper* of their Life.
But what's *Eternity?* Good Reader, look
Not on my *Verſes*, but upon this *Book*:
Which I do wiſh (and yet no harm) may be
To all *e'relaſting*, Stationer, but to thee.

Richard Williams.

Upon

Upon this Book of Eternity.

LOok on the *Glaſs* of Man's *Mortality*;
Behold the *Mirror* of *Eternity*.
This *Book* is both; Herein behold thy Face,
It waxeth old; thy *Glaſs* doth run apace.
It is appointed all Men once to die;
And after *Death* ſucceeds *Eternity*.
This *Life*'s no *Life*, which *Time* doth comprehend,
But that's true *Life* indeed, which knows no end.
This *Book* will teach thee ſo to *live* and *die*,
That thou may'ſt live unto *Eternity*.

Thomas Gouge.

Upon this Book of Eternity.

THis *Book*'s a *Nautick Chard*; which kept in *Eye*,
Doth *point* at th' *Haven* of bleſt *Eternity*.
[O bleſſed *Haven!*] At which if thou wouldſt land,
Let not this *Chard* depart out of thine hand.

S. I.

THE

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Con-

The word of God most High is the fountain of wisdom and her wayes are everlasting commandements. Eccl: 1. 5.

The infant playes with fate and Nature the fool with Eternitie but ye wise man shall have dominion over the starres.

Considerations Upon ETERNITY.

THE FIRST CONSIDERATION, *What Eternity is?*

Simonides being asked by *Hiero* King of *Sicily*, *What God was*, desired one day to consider upon it: and after one day past, having not yet found it out, desired yet two days more to consider further upon it; and after two days, he desired three: and to conclude at length he had no answer to return unto the King but this, That the more he thought upon it, the more still he might; for the further he busied himself in the search thereof, the further he was from

Cicero lib. 1. de Nat. Deor.

finding it. The thing that we are here now to consider upon is *Eternity*: and the first question that offers it self unto our consideration is, *What Eternity is?* *Boetius* saith, that it is altogether and at once, the intire and perfect possession of a life that never shall have an end. And let no man take it ill, if we say that it cannot be known, and that the more we search into it, the more we lose our selves in the search of it. For how can that be defined which hath no bounds or limits? If any man urge us further and desire us to shadow it out, at least by some, though obscure, description: our answer is, That it may easier be done by declaring what it is not, rather than what it is; so doth *Plato* concerning God: *What God is*, saith he, *that I know not? What he is not, that I know.* So *Augustine* Bishop of *Hippo*, in his sixty fourth Sermon upon the words of our Lord, describeth the true beautitude which is in Heaven, by removing from it the very thought of all evil. *We may more easily find*, saith he, *what is not there, than what is. In Heaven there is neither grief, nor sorrow, nor penury, nor defect, no disease, nor death, nor any evil.* So may we say concerning *Eternity*. For, whatsoever

Lib. 5. de Cons.

In Timæo.

whatſoever in this life we either ſee with our eyes, or let in by our outward ſenſes that is not Eternal. *For the things that are ſeen*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are Eternal.* Hence every man may ſay, This my joy, theſe my pleaſures and delights, this treaſure, this honour, this ſtately building, this life of mine, all is *Tranſitory*, nothing *Eternal.* A man can point at nothing which ſhall not periſh and have an end. Indeed the ignorant multitude uſe to ſpeak after this manner. This Structure is for *Eternity*, this Monument is everlaſting. And the impatient Man is wont to complain that his pains are without end. But theſe *Eternities* are very ſhort, and a man may eaſily in words comprehend them: Say what thou canſt of the true *Eternity*, thou muſt needs come far ſhort of it. 2 *Cor.* 4. 18.

So ſaith *Auguſtine*; *Thou ſayeſt of Eternity whatſoever thou wilt: But therefore thou ſayeſt whatſoever thou wilt, becauſe thou canſt not ſay all, ſay what thou wilt: But therefore thou muſt needs ſay ſomething, that ſtill thou mayeſt have ſomething to think which thou canſt not ſay.* *Triſinegiſtus* ſaith, *That the Soul* is the *Horizon* of *Time* and *Eternity*: For, in that it *In Aſclep.*

 In Pſal. 65.

it is immortal, it is partaker of *Eternity*; and in that it is infused by God into the Body, it is partaker of *Time*. But before we proceed any further, for orders sake let us see what Men of former times, *Romans*, *Grecians*, *Egyptians*, and others, have thought of *Eternity*. For they acknowledged it for certain, and represented it divers ways.

CHAP. I.

What Men of former times have thought of Eternity: and how they have represented it.

FIrst of all, they have represented *Eternity* by a *Ring*, or a *Circle*, which hath neither beginning nor ending, which is proper only to *God's Eternity*: seeing therefore that God is *Eternal*, and his duration is properly called *Eternity*, the *Egyptians* used to signifie *God* by a *Circle*. And the *Persians* thought they honoured God most, when going up to the top of the highest Tower, they called him the *Circle of Heaven*. And it was a custom among the *Turks* (as *Pierius* teacheth at large) to cry out every morning from an high Tower, *God always was, and always will be*; and then to salute their *Mahomet*.

The

The *Sarazens* alſo uſed to call God a *Circle*. *Mercurius Triſmegiſtus*, whom I named before, the moſt memorable amongſt Philoſophers, (who wrote more Books than any mortal Man beſide, if we may believe *Seleucus* and *Meneceus*,) ſaid, That God was an intellectual *Sphere*, whoſe *Centre* is every where, and *Circumference* no where: becauſe God's Majeſty and Immenſity are terminated no where. For this cauſe the Antients built unto their Gods Temples for figure *round*. So *Numa Pompilius* is ſaid to have conſecrated to *Veſta* a *round Table* at *Rome*. So *Auguſtus Cæſar*, in the name of *Agrippa*, dedicated to all the Gods a *round Temple*, and called it *Pantheon*. Hereupon *Pythagoras*, to ſhew God's *Eternity*, taught his Scholars to worſhip him, turning their Bodies round about. And there was a Statute made by *Numa*, (as *Briſſonius* witneſſeth,) That they which were about to worſhip God, ſhould turn themſelves round. Therefore God is, according to the Antients, a *Circle*, but a *Circle* without a *Periphery* or *Circumference*, whoſe *Centre* is every where; becauſe God is the beginning and end of all things. Whereupon *Job* moſt juſtly cries out, *Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be ſearched out.* *Job* 36. 26.

Again, they have represented *Eternity* by a *Sphere* and a *Globe*. Therefore *Faustina* the Empress had Money stampt after this figure and superscription: There was a *Globe* on which the Empress sate stretching forth one hand, and holding in the other a *Scepter* with this Inscription, ETERNITY. Hence it was that many of the Antients thought the World to be *Eternal*, because it was *Round*, whom Saint *Basil* answers very fitly, *Let the World be a Circle; but the beginning of the Circle is the Centre.*

In the third place they have represented *Eternity* by a *Seat*; by which is signified *Eternal Rest*. The *Nasamones*, a certain People of *Africa*, for the most part did not only breath out their last sitting upon a Seat, but also desired to be buried after that position, as having then attained to *Eternity*, and a long cessation from all their Labours: As in many places at this day Kings and Emperors are found sitting in Vaults under the Earth, in silence and mournful Majesty. And it was usual with the *Romans* to support, with such like, the molten Statues of their deceased Emperors, as having then the fruition of *Eternity*. Some there are that thus reason with themselves oftentimes. Behold, I have been a long time held and oppressed with cares

cares and labours: But now why do I not take ſome reſpite? Who do I not make ſome pauſe? Why do I not reſt from my labours? I have laboured long enough: let others labour as much as I have done; for my part I'le reſt now, and take mine eaſe. So they ſet up their ſeats, and promiſe unto themſelves days of reſt: but (alas!) they are of no long continuance. They ſet up their ſeats, and embrace their eaſe; but neither in due time nor place. Oh! how truly and devoutly doth that Golden Book, of the Imitation of Chriſt, give us a pull by the ear, in theſe words, *Diſpoſe and order all things according to thine own will, and the luſt of thine own eyes, and yet thou ſhalt never find, but thou ſhalt always ſuffer one thing, or other, either willingly or by conſtraint, and ſo thou ſhalt always find a Croſs.* The whole life of Chriſt was a croſs, and Martyrdom; and doſt thou ſeek reſt and pleaſure? Therefore we muſt ſet up our ſeat in Heaven, and not here, for here amongſt ſo many troubles it can never ſtand quiet; and though all other things ſhould ſpare, yet death at length will overturn. There is no true reſt to be hoped for, but that which is *Eternal.* But if there be any reſt in this life, this it is. For a Man to com-

Kempis, lib. 1. c. 12

mit himself, and all that is his to the Will of God, to put his whole trust and confidence in him, and to account all other things beside, but vain. So are we taught in *Ecclesiasticus*; *Trust in God, and abide in thy Peace*, Without this rest of the Soul all other things are meer troubles, a meer Sea of Tempestuous Waves, and the very presence of Hell. But I return to the Ancients.

Eccles. 11. 21,

In the fourth place they have represented *Eternity* by the *Sun* and the *Moon*. The *Sun* reviveth every day, although it seems every day to die, and to be buried. It always riseth again, although every night it setteth. The *Moon* also hath her increase after every wane. *Catullus* hath pretty verses to this purpose.

In Hendecasyl.

The Sun *doth set: the* Sun *doth rise again.*
The Day *doth close; the* Day *doth break again.*
Once set our Sun, *again it riseth never:*
Once close our Day *of Life, it's* Night *for ever.*

In Hell there is *Eternal night*, but without sleep. There they sleep not, because they slept here, where they should have watched: there they watch, because here they

they ſlept in their Sins; indeed not long, but longer they would if they could, yea, *Eternally*. But it is far otherwiſe with thoſe that are in Heaven: For a perpetual Light ſhall ſhine forth to the Saints, and *Eternity* of time, there is reſt; there is pleaſure after long labours and watchings.

In the fifth place, they have repreſented *Eternity* by the *Baſiliſk*. The *Baſiliſk* is the moſt venomous of all Creatures, and it alone of all others (as *Horus Niliacus* ſaith) cannot be killed by humane force; yea it is ſo virulent, that it killeth Herbs with the very breath of it, that it puts to flight all other Creatures with the hiſſing of it, and that it makes all Birds ſuddenly ſilent upon the firſt preſence of it. *Ælianus* reports, that in the Deſart of *Africa*, a certain Beaſt fell down, being tired, and that the Serpents came together, as it were to a Feaſt, to devour the Carcaſe, and that they preſently ran all away, and hid themſelves in the Sand, upon the ſight of the *Baſiliſk*. *Eternity*, whether of Joy, or of Torment, cannot be ſhortened or diminiſhed, much leſs taken away or avoided. Neither is it ſtrange, if it affright all that are in their right Wits, with the very thought of it. Infinite are the windings of this *Baſiliſk*; unmeaſurable and untwinable are the *Orbs* and *Circuits* of it. Oh Dragon

to

to be trembled at! Let us divert a little to our selves. It comes to pass sometimes, when a Man descends into himself, and rips up his Conscience by Confession, that he finds many Serpents Nests, and whole broods of Vipers, and thereupon much marvelleth in himself, saying, Whence is there so much venom in my Breast? Whence are so many fat Snakes, so many grievous and deadly Sins? Whence is there so great an host of Lizards? Whence so many filthy and lustful Cogitations? I am afraid my self at such a numerous and pestilent Brood. But marvel not; we shall easily shew thee the cause thereof. A moist and a rude place is very apt to breed Serpents. Lo then, there is a double cause; the moisture of the place, and the negligence of them that should look to it. So it is in the Soul of Man; if we spend all our care upon our Body, handling it delicately, feeding it daintily, pampering it with Feasts, and effeminating it with pleasures, it must needs be confessed that the Soul, the inhabitant thereof, hath her dwelling in a moist place. Add hither slothfulness, and neglect of Divine Duties. Let no care be had at all of Salvation; so the Body be sound, and it goeth well with it, let no regard be had what happens to the Soul: let Confession of Sins be seldom made unto

God,

God; and when it is, but in a negligent manner: what marvel then, if a multitude of Serpents and poysonous Vermine breed there? But (O good Christian Brother) let the *Basilisk* enter into thy breast, that is, the cogitation of *Eternity*, and thou shalt presently perceive that these venomous Beasts will soon vanish away. Thou confessest that thy Heart doth abound with these Snakes: It is a sign therefore thou seldom thinkest upon *Eternity*. Amend therefore; and now at length begin to think upon this with thy self, *That which delighteth is but Momentary, but that which tormenteth is Eternal.*

In the sixth place, they have represented *Eternity* after this manner. There is a *vast Den* full of Horrors; round about which a *Serpent* winds it self, and in the winding bites it self by the Tail. At the right hand of the Den stands *a young Man* of a beautiful and pleasant Countenance, holding in his right hand a *Bow* and *two Arrows*, and in his left hand an *Harp*. In the very entrance of the Den sits an *old Man* opposite, and having his Eyes very intent upon his *Table-Book*; according as the Cœlestial Globe by its Motion, or the young Man standing by, dictates unto him, so he writes. At the left hand of the Den sits a *grave Matron*, grey-headed, and having her Eyes always

always busied. At the mouth of the Den there are *four stairs*, each higher than other: The first is of *Iron*, the second of *Brass*, the third of *Silver*, and the fourth of *Gold*. On these are little Children running up and down, and playing, and never fear the danger of falling. This is the *Picture*. The meaning is this: The *Den* signifies the incomprehensibility of *Eternity*: The *Serpent*, that twines it self about it, *Time*: The *Young Man*, God; in whose hand is *Heaven*, *Earth*, and *Hell*. On *Earth*, and in *Hell*, are the *Arrows* of the Lord fastened; but in *Heaven*, there is nothing but *Joy*, and the sound of the *Harp*: The *Old Man* is *Fate*, or rather, that which God hath *decreed* from all *Eternity*: The *Matron*, *Nature*: The *Stairs*, distinct *Times* and *Ages*: The *Children* running up and down the Stairs, do signifie things created, especially *Man*, who is sporting in matters of Salvation, and playing and jesting in the very entrance of *Eternity*. Alack, alack! O mortal Men, we have played too long amidst these Dangers: We are very near unto *Eternity*, even in the very entrance of it, whilst we live: Let but Death lightly touch us, and we are presently swallowed up of *Eternity*. Death need not use any great power, or fight long against us; we are thrown down headlong in a moment,

and

and tumble down these Stairs into the *Ocean* of *Eternity*. Bethink your selves well, you that play upon these Stairs, and think upon any thing rather than upon *Eternity*; It may be *to day* or *to morrow* you may be translated from *Time* to *Eternity*.

CHAP. II.

The secret sence and meaning of Scripture is unfolded.

AFter the Chapter of the *Type* and *Picture* of *Eternity*, the Holy Scripture of Divine Truth shall not unfitly follow. When *Nebuchadnezzer*, King of *Babylon*, had cast the three *Hebrew* Children into the fiery Furnace for refusing to obey his impious Command, the flame is said to have ascended nine and forty cubits above the Furnace. A strange thing: But not without a mystery. VVhat? Did any Man accurately measure the height thereof? Did any Man ascend and apply unto it a rule, to take the just measure of it? Was it just nine and forty cubits, neither more nor less? VVhy not fifty? For we use to number thus, Twenty, Thirty, Forty, Fifty, though the number be somewhat more or less. Here in this place there wants but one of fifty. Surely there is a Mystery in it.

it, and some secret meaning. The number of fifty was wont to signifie the year of *Jubilee*. But the Flames in the fiery Furnace of Hell, although they rage both against Body and Soul, and infinitely exceed all the torments of this life, yet they shall never extend so far as the year of Grace and *Jubilee*. In Hell there is no year of *Jubilee*, no pardon, no end of torments. *Now, now*, is the time of *Jubilee*; not every hundred or fifty years, but every hour and every moment. *Now* one part of an hour may obtain pardon here, which all *Eternity* cannot hereafter. *Now* is the time, that in one little and short day we may have more debts forgiven us, than in the fire of Hell in all years and times to come hereafter.

Let us add hither another explication of Divine Scripture. When the People of God did pass over *Jordan*, *the waters which came down* toward the Sea of the plain (which is now called the dead Sea) failed until there was none left. And in *Ecclesiasticus* it is said, *There is that buyeth much for a little.* These two Testimonies of Scripture *Galfrid* joyneth together, and thereupon discourseth thus. If *Eternal* bitterness be due unto thee, and thou maist

Josh. 3. 16.

Eccles. 20. 12.

escape

escape it by tasting of *Temporal*, certainly thou hast redeemed *much for a little.* I confess, it is a Sea indeed in which thou failest, but yet a *dead Sea*: and how much art thou bound to give Thanks unto God, who, whereas thou hast deserved to be overwhelmed in the salt, roaring and unnavigable Sea, hath of his great Mercy toward thee, suffered thee rather to sail in the *dead Sea*: (O blessed change!) That so by the *dead Sea* thou mayest pass into the *land* of the *living!* This Writer compares all the Adversities of this *Life* to the *dead Sea*, and *Eternal* Punishment to the *salt* and *unchangeable Sea.* No Man can escape them, he must needs fall into the one, or in the other. What dost thou, O Man? (cries out Saint *Chrysostom*,) Art thou about to ascend up to Heaven, and doest thou ask me whether there be any difficulties by the way? Whatsoever we do, this *dead Sea* we must pass over: we may, if we will, arrive at the Haven of Tranquility, and *Eternal* Happiness.

The Word of God most high is the Fountain of Wisdom, and her ways are Everlasting Commandments. Eccles. 1. 5.

Through this dead Sea there is no other way into the Region of the Living, but the way of God's Commandments. We have a most clear place of Scripture for it:

If

Mat.19. 17. *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandements :* This is the only way to *Eternity.* If a man should ask a Divine of our times this question, *What is Eternity ?* His answer will be, It is a *Circle* running back into it self, whose *Centre* is *Always*, and *Circumference No where*, that is, which never shall have end. *What is Eternity ?* It is an *Orb* every way round, and like it self, in which there is neither beginning nor end. *What is Eternity ?* It is a Wheel,

Cornelius à Lapide.

Volvitur, & volvetur in omne volubilis ævum.

A Wheel that turns, a Wheel that turneth ever,
A Wheel that turns, and will leave turning never.

Whan is Eternity ? It is a *Tear* continually wheeling about, which returns again to the same Point from whence it began, and still wheels about again. *What is Eternity ?* It is an *ever-running Fountain*, whither the Waters, after many turnings, flow back again, that they may always flow. *What is Eternity ?* It is an *ever-living Spring*, from whence Waters continually flow, either the most sweet Waters of *Benediction* and Blessing, or the most bitter Waters of *Malediction* and Cursing. *What is Eternity ?* It is a

Labyrinth

Labyrinth which hath innumerable turnings and windings, which always lead them round that enter in, carrying them from turning to turning, and ſo loſing them. *What is Eternity?* It is a *pit without bottom*, whoſe turnings and revolutions are endleſs. *What is Eternity?* It is a *Spiral Line*, but without beginning; which hath Circles and windings one within another, but without ending. *What is Eternity?* It is a *Snake bowed back unto it ſelf* orbicularly, holding the Tail in the mouth, which in its end doth again begin, and never ceaſeth to begin. *What is Eternity?* It is a *duration always preſent*, it is *one perpetual day*, which is not divided into that which is paſt, and that which is to come. *What is Eternity?* It is an *Age of Ages*, as *Dionyſius* ſaith, never expiring, but always like it ſelf, without changing. *What is Eternity?* It is a beginning without beginning, middle, or end. It is a beginning, continuing, never ending, always beginning. In which the bleſſed always begin a bleſſed Life, and always abound with new pleaſures: in which the Damned always die, and after all death and ſtruggling with death, always begin again to die and ſtruggle with death. As long as God ſhall be God, ſo long ſhall the bleſſed be bleſſed, ſo long ſhall they reign

and

and triumph: so long shall the damned also fry in Hell, and yelling cry, *We are tormented in this flame*, being still to be tormented and tortured for ever.

CHAP. III.

Why the place of Eternity is called a Mansion.

JOHN, *Patriarch* of *Alexandria*, a very devout and godly Man, was often wont to go to visit the sick, and took with him, for his Companion, *Troilus* a Bishop, which had more care of his Mony than of the sick. The *Patriarch* whispereth him in the Ear, and said, I pray thee, Brother let us help the Friends of Christ. Whereupon *Troilus*, like a crafty Companion, concealing the disease of his mind, to wit, his Covetuousness, bad his Servant give to the Poor all the Mony, which at that time he had about him, to buy other things withal. Not long after it happened that he fell into a Fever, which his Covetuousness had caused: whereof the *Patriarch* of *Alexandria* hearing, and easily guessing at the cause of his disease, went to visit him, and carried with him as much Silver, as he had not long before given to the sick: and after a little conference with him, he said thus,

thus, I did but jeſt with thee the other day, when I wiſhed thee to beſtow ſomething to the relief of the ſick; and it was becauſe my ſervant had not Money about him. But behold here, in good earneſt I reſtore unto thee the Mony which thou laidſt out for my ſake, and I thank thee for it. When *Troilus* ſaw the Money told, his Fever began to leave him, and his heat to abate, and in every part he found himſelf much better; whereupon finding himſelf gather ſtrength, he roſe up to Dinner, and ſat down to Table. About noon-tide when Dinner was ended, and the Table removed, he went to ſleep, and ſweetly took his eaſe, and dreamed that he ſaw a very ſtately Edifice, and in the *frontiſpeice* thereof over the Gate this Inſcription, *Manſio Æterna & Requies Troili Epiſcopi*: In Engliſh thus, *The Eternal Manſion and Reſting place of Biſhop* Troilus. He was very much delighted with this dream. But not long after he had another Viſion that troubled him. For there came one with a company of Workmen, and gave them a ſtrict charge, ſaying, Take away that Inſcription, and put this in the place thereof, *Manſio Æterna & Requies Johannis Archiepiſcopi Alexandria, empta libris triginta argenti*: In Engliſh thus, *The Eternal Manſion and Reſting*

Resting place of John *Archbishop of* Alexandria, *which he bought for thirty Pounds.* With this Vision he was very much affrighted: but he made a very good use of it. For presently, of an hard and covetous Man, he became liberal and Charitable, especially to such as were in need. So much did the very dream of an *Eternal Mansion* prevail with him.

But Oh ye rather blessed Mansions, and therefore blessed, because *Eternal*! Oh, how exceedingly doth Christ desire that we should loath and forsake these our Tabernacles, and ruinous Houses, and with earnest desire make haste unto those *Eternal Mansions*! *In my Fathers House*, saith he, *are many Mansions:* No Man is kept back from thence but by himself. The place excludes no Man: for it is exceeding large. Time shuts out no Man: for there is a Mansion, and that Mansion is *Eternal.*

A Prayer.

O Eternal and merciful God, O Eternal Truth, *O true Love, O beloved Eternity; So cure our blindness, that by these present and short sorrows we may be brought to know, and so escape the future, horrible,*

horrible, and Eternal *Puniſhments. Direct us,* and teach *us ſo to poſſeſs things periſhing and Temporal, that finally we loſe not the things which are* Eternal. *Teach us ſo to lament for our Sins committed, that we may eſcape* Eternal *Puniſhments. Teach us ſo to behave our ſelves in the Houſe of our Pilgrimage, that we be not ſhut out of the* Eternal Manſions. *Teach us ſo to make our* progreſs *in the way, that at length we may be received into our* Country.

THE

The perpetuall hills did bowe, his wayes are everlasting. Habac: 3.6.

The Salamander, the Basilisk, the Phenix, the golden ring, the fiery mountain, may heereupon earth put us in minde of Eternitie: but onely blessed Eternitie can make us eternall in heaven.

THE SECOND CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

In what things Nature repreſenteth Eternity.

THE Idolaters themſelves therefore have acknowledged an *Eternity*, ſuch as it was, and have deſcribed it alſo by certain ſigns: For God hath manifeſted it unto them, *ſo that they are without Excuſe.* How much dearer therefore, and in what great eſteem ought the conſideration thereof to be amonſt all Chriſtians, to whom *Eternity* is better repreſented, and in a more lively manner! *Therefore thou art inexcuſable, O man, whoſoever thou art,* that being often put in mind of *Eternity*, doſt as often let it ſlip out of thy memory. Thou haſt often in thy ſight and before thine eyes, *Rings* and *Circles*, *Spheres* and *Globes*, *Sun* and *Moon*: If thou

Rom. 1. 20.

Rom. 2. 1.

lookest upon any of these, they will put thee in mind of *Eternity*. Nature her self like a good mother hath exposed them to publick view, that, when we see them, or hear of them, we might be invited to mediate upon *Eternity*.

Solinus reports that there is a Stone in *Arcadia* called *Asbestos*, which being once set on fire doth continually burn: Wherefore in times past they were wont in Temples and Sepulchres to make Lamps of it; of which St. *Augustine* maketh mention. I add that *Plinj*, *Volaterranus*, *Dioscorides*, and many others, tell strange wonders of a certain kind of *Line* or *Flax*, which is called by divers names: For some call it *Linum Asbestinum*, others *Carystium*, others *Indicum*, and others *Linum vivum*.

Lib. 21. *de Civit.* *cap.* 5.

This is not only not consumed by fire, but also is purged and cleansed; wherefore the dead Bodies of Kings heretofore, when they were to be put into the fire, and to be burned, used to be wrapped about with a Linnen-cloth made thereof, to keep their ashes from confusion, and to distinguish them from others. Of such Flax *Nero* had a Towel, which he esteemed of more price than Gold and precious Stones. Behold, *Nature* her self, like a *Mistress* and Guide, leadeth

leadeth thee by the hand, and pointeth thee to a thing which the fire hath no power to consume. So shall all the damned burn, but never shall burn out. They shall always burn, but never be consumed; they shall seek for Death in the flames, but shall not find it. Therefore justly doth one cry out, *O wo Eternal, that shall never have end! O end without end! O death more grievous than all death. Always to die, and never to be quite dead!* So saith divine *Isaiah*, *Their fire shall never be quenched*: And the Angel in the *Revelations*, *They shall desire to die: and death shall flee from them.*

In Horolog. sapien Isa. 66. 24. Rev. 9. 6

That the *Salamander* for a little time can indure, and live in the Fire, besides *Aristotle*, *Pliny*, *Galen*, *Ælian*, *Dioscorides*, S. *Augustine* also himself believed. This Creature is very cold, and generated of Showers; the Sun and Drought are death to it: Therefore, according to *Pliny*, it endures in the Flame like Ice. Of the Skin thereof Lights are made for perpetual burning Lamps. God who made the *Salamander* of Earth and Clay, hath of his Goodness formed Man, though of the same Matter, yet of a more excellent and noble Nature. He hath *made him a little lower than the Angels*, *Psal.* 8. 4. He hath assigned un-

to him after this life the fellowſhip of the ſame Kingdom with the Angels. *But Man being in honour had no underſtanding, and was compared unto the beaſts that periſh, Pſal.* 49. 20. By his own Malice he made himſelf ſuch a *Salamander*, that muſt always live or always dye in *Eternal* Flames. In thoſe fiery Priſons of Hell, *all things are Eternal*; but theſe *ſix things eſpecially.*

CHAP. I.

What things are Eternal in Hell.

THE *damned* himſelf is *Eternal* and dyeth not. No Man can make an end of himſelf, or another. *They ſhall ſeek death, and ſhall not find it, Rev.* 9. 6. Yea the very deſire of Death, in as much as their deſire cannot be ſatisfied, ſhall greatly increaſe their Torments.

2. *The Priſon* it ſelf is *Eternal:* It can never fall to ruin, it can never be broken down, it can never be digged through: It is barred up with Rocks and Mountains: The Locks and Bars are ſo firm and ſtrong, that none can get out. If any of the damned ſhould, by God's permiſſion, before the day of Judgment come out from thence, yet ſtill he ſhould carry an Hell about him,

him, and never be free from torment.

3. *The Fire* there is *Eternal.* Christ himself in *Matthew* saith as much expressly; *Matth.* 25. 41. *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire*, or *fire Eternal.* Doſt thou hear this word, *Eternal?* The Anger of the Lord doth kindle this Fire, and it ſhall never be put out. To this beareth *Iſaiah* witneſs, ſaying, *The breath of the Lord like a ſtream of Brimſtone doth kindle it*; it ſhall burn night and day, and *ſhall not be quenched, the ſmoke* thereof *ſhall aſcend up for ever and ever*, Iſaiah 30. 33. Iſaiah 66. 24. Rev. 14. 11. *Eternal Puniſhments*, and *Eternal Life* are *Relates*, as St. *Auguſtine* ſpeaketh; and *Relates* are of like continuance: To ſay therefore, that *Eternal Life* ſhall be without End, and *Eternal Puniſhment* ſhall have an End, is very abſurd. Who therefore will defer his Converſion? *Lib.* 12. *de Civ.* *c.* 23.

4. As the things mentioned before are *Eternal*, ſo is the *Worm*, and Conſcience tormented with deep Deſpair for the Life paſt, Iſa. 66. 24. *Their worm ſhall not dye*: So propheſied *Iſaiah*. The Poets of old tranſlated this out of Holy Writ into their Fables: For what is that *Tityus*, of whom *Virgil* feigneth, That a flying *Vulture* every day gnaws and tears his *Liver*, which is

every night again repaired and made up, that every day the *Vulture* may have more prey to gnaw upon? What is the *Vulture* but the *Worm* we ſpeak of! And what is the *Liver*, but the *Conſcience* always gnawn, and tormented?

5. To this *Eternity* of Hell belongeth alſo the *laſt Sentence*, and the *laſt Decree* pronounced by Chriſt the Judge: A Decree (Alas!) irrevocable, immutable, *Eternal*. There is no *Appealing* from it: If the Sentence be once pronounced by the Mouth of this Judge, it ſtands irrevocable for all *Eternity*. In Hell there is no Redemption, not any, no not any; but *Eternal* Deſparation. The Blood of Chriſt when it was newly poured out on the Mount of *Golgotha*, though of infinite efficacy for Satisfaction, yet reacheth not unto the damned. *If the Yoke of the Lord*, ſaith St. *Bernard*, *be a Yoke of Repentance, you think that in it ſelf it is not ſweet: But this you muſt know, That it is moſt ſweet, if it be compared with the fire, of which it is ſaid, Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire*, Mat. 25. 41.

6. The *Puniſhment* or *Pain of loſs* alſo, as they call it, is *Eternal*, being the privation of the ſight of God for ever, which together with all the other torments of the damned ſhall never have End; becauſe there

there can be no place for satisfaction. For although these torments shall continue infinite millions of years, yet there shall not one day, no nor one hour, no nor so much as a moment of rest and respite be granted. There shall be vicissitude and variety of torments, but to their greater pain and grief. Christ often foretold it by *Matthew* in plain words, *Matth.* 8. 12. *The children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into utter darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth: weeping*, for heat; and *gnashing of teeth*, for cold. How then can Man be so forgetful of himself and God? How can he so degenerate into a beast? Yea rather, how can he become like a rock, or a stone, so senseless, as when he shall think upon the unsufferable and unutterable torments of Hell, which never shall have an end, then not to fear and tremble, and say with himself thus, I am for certain in the way to *Eternity*, and I know not how soon I may come to my journies end: I sit on the stairs of *Eternity*, and every little thrust is ready to plunge me into the bottomless pit? But if it seem so grievous and intolerable for a man to lye, though but for one night, on a soft Feather-bed, and never sleep or close his eyes, but to sigh and groan for pain in his head, or any other member, for the

tooth-ach, or for the stone: If the night seems long, and the day a great way off, and the Sun to slack his coming: And yet, as I said, he lies upon a good Feather-bed, and if he will have but a little patience, he may hope to find ease in the day, and help from the Physician. Alack, Alack! how intolerable shall it be to lie night and day in the fire, for a thousand and a thousand, and again, I say, a thousand years! How intolerable shall it be, there to watch, to hunger, to thirst, to burn, to be tormented extreamly in every part, and not to hope for any rest, or so much as a drop of cold Water; but to be always in despair, and so to fry and to be tortured for infinite millions of ages, and to be so far from finding any end, as never to be able to hope for any end! There, saith *Thomas*, one hours punishment shall be more grievous, than an hundred years here in the most bitter punishment that can be. There is no rest, no consolation to the damned, Psal. 6. 1. *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.* Psal. 25. 7. *Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions.* Unless thou wilt have mercy, O God, I must needs perish.

De Christ. imitat. lib. 1. cap. 24.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Why Hell is Eternal.

HEre ariſeth a queſtion, which is worthy to be known of all Men, How it can be, that God, who is good and merciful, and whoſe Mercy is over all his Works, ſhould notwithſtanding puniſh even one mortal Sin, committed, it may be, in a moment, and in Thought only; how he ſhould puniſh ſuch a Sin, I ſay, for all *Eternity*; and ſo puniſh it, that it ſhall deſerve ſtill always to be puniſhed: and though Millions of Years be paſſed, yet it ſhall never be ſaid, This Sin hath been ſufficiently puniſhed; it is enough, he hath made Satisfaction for the wicked Thought, by which he hath offended God.

What then? Hath God for one Sin, and that in thought only, decreed the puniſhment of everlaſting Fire? What equality is there in this, for a *Momentary* Sin, to appoint an *Eternal* Puniſhment? Why doth bleſſed *David* cry out, *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever!* Pſal. 106. 1. 107. 1. 118. 1. 136. 1. and why doth he repeat it twenty ſeven times, if God be ſo ſevere? To this St. *Auguſtine*, *Gregory*, *Thomas Aquinas*, and others anſwer, That in every

mortal ſin the offence of its own nature is infinite, becauſe it is an Injury againſt the Infinite Majeſty of God. Again, He that dyeth guilty of a mortal Sin without Repentance, doth as much as if he ſhould ſin *Eternally*: For if he might live *Eternally*, he would ſin *Eternally*: He hath not loſt a will to ſin, but life in which to ſin; ſtill being ready to ſin, if he might live ſtill: So he doth not ceaſe to ſin, but doth ceaſe to live. Further it is to be conſidered, That a damned Perſon can never make Satisfaction, though he ſhould pay never ſo much: For being an Enemy, and not in favour with God, his payment is not worthy acceptation; ſeeing that he himſelf is not accepted with him. Neither indeed, to ſpeak truly, can he be ſaid to pay any thing; becauſe he doth nothing, but ſuffers only Puniſhment, and that againſt his will. We will make the matter yet more plain by a familiar Example. Suppoſe a Man ſhould borrow of his Neighbour a thouſand Crowns, and for the uſe thereof make over the Rent of his Houſe unto him for ever. It may be in twenty Years he may thus repay the ſum of Money borrowed: But what then? Is he fully diſcharged of all the Debt? Doth there remain nothing to be paid? The principal remains ſtill as due to be paid,

as

as if there had been nothing at all paid. For this is the nature of ſuch lones, that although the yearly uſe be paid, ſtill the principal remains entire, and due to be paid. So it is with the damned: For although they ſhould pay never ſo much; yet they can never get out of debt: They are debtors ſtill, and ever ſhall be. *Iſai.* 1. 31. *The ſtrong ſhall be as tow, and the maker of it as a ſpark; they ſhall both burn together, and none ſhall quench them.*

Suetonius reports of *Tiberius Cæſar*, that being Petioned unto by a certain offender to haſten his puniſhment, and to grant him a ſpeedy diſpatch, he made him this anſwer, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay Sir, *You and I are not yet Friends*. Chriſt is a moſt juſt Judge, no Tyrant, no *Tiberius*. And yet if one of the damned after a thouſand years burning in Hell ſhould beg and intreat for a ſpeedy death, he would anſwer after the ſame manner, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, *You and I are not yet Friends*. If after a thouſand years more he ſhould ask the ſame thing, he ſhould receive the ſame anſwer, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, *You and I are not yet Friends*. If after an hundred thouſand years yet more, yea millions of years, he ſhould ask again, again he

Sueton. lib. 3. cap. 6.

I e should receive the same answer, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, *You and I are not yet Friends.* The time was, I offered to be thy *Friend*; but thou wou'dst not; yea, thy *Father*, but thou wouldst not. I offered thee my grace a thousand and a thousand times; but thou rejectedst it. This I knew right well, and I held my p ace, and further expected, forty, fifty, six y years, to see if thou wouldst change thy mind and course of life. But there followed no serious or true repentance. *Thou hast set at nought all my counsel, and wouldst none of my reproof. Thou hast hated instruction, and hast cast my words behind thee*, Prov. 1. 25. Psal. 50. 17. Eat therefore the fruit of thine own ways, and be filled with thy own counsels. Prov. 1. 26. *I will laugh* at thy destruction for ever: neither shall my justice after infinite ages give thee any answer but this, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, *You and I are not yet Friends.* O God which art in Heaven! O sin which throwest men headlong into hell, the hell of torments, and into the bottomless pit of *Eternal* pains! But *righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments.* Psal. 119. 137. Just and right it is, that he which would not by repentance accept of mercy when it was offered, should by punishment be tormented, and

and have justice without mercy for ever.

CHAP. III.

Other motives to the consideration of Eternity, drawn from Nature.

BUT I return to the School of *Nature*, to consider further upon *Eternity*. There are found *hot Baths* in certain Mountains and Rocks, whose waters in running make such a noise and murmuring, that the diseased persons that resort thither for cure, if at the entrance into the *Bath*, they do but imagine they hear musical Instruments, and an harmonious consort, they have their ears so dulled with the continual noise thereof, that the musick which at first was sweet unto them, becomes at length, by their imagination working upon it, very loathsome, and a torment unto them: But if they imagine they hear a Drum, or any other loud sounding instrument, they at length grow almost mad with the noise thereof daily molesting and troubling them. From whence also we are lead, as it were by the hand, to the consideration of *Eternity*. The weeping and wailing, yelling and crying which is heard at the first entrance of hells mouth under those infernal moun-

mountains shall never cease, but shall torment the damned without end, and be no whit mitigated by time and long sufferance. But on the contrary the Blessed in Heaven shall without wearinesse hear the *Thrice Holy* song, *Holy, Holy, Holy*; yea, and the more they hear it, the more they shall be delighted with the sound thereof. Christ in his Conference with the Woman of *Samaria*, makes often mention of *Eternity*, and life everlasting. *Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: But the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life*, John 4. 14. I would we did thirst with the Woman of *Samaria* after those waters, and earnestly pray for them: *O Lord give me of this water, that I thurst not*, John 4. 15. Give me, O Christ, though but *a drop* of this water that is, *some thirst* and desire after *Eternal* life. In the year after the Nativity of our Lord fourscore and one (as *Suetonius*, *Dion*, and *Plinius Secundus* tell at large) on the first day of *November*, about seven of the Clock, at the Mountain *Vesuvius* in *Campania*, there was an horrible eruption of fire, before which there went an unusual drought, and grievous Earthquakes. There was also heard a noise under Earth, as if it had been thunder. The Sea roared and made

made a noiſe; the Heaven thundred as if Mountains had in conflict met together; great ſtones were ſeen to fall; the Air was filled with ſmoke and fire mixt together; the Sun did hide his head: Whereupon it was thought by many that the World was almoſt at an End, and that the laſt Day was come, wherein all ſhould be conſumed with fire: For there was ſuch abundance of aſhes ſcattered up and down over Land and Sea, and in the Air, that there was much hurt done amongſt Men and Cattle, and in the Fields; that Fiſh and Fowl were deſtroyed; that two Cities, the name of the one was *Herculanum*, and the name of the other *Pompeii*, were utterly ruined. Theſe and ſuch other like *Caverns* in the Earth, with *Precipices* and *fiery Mountains* always flaming, but never going out, are lively Examples given us by God, to put us in mind of the fire of Hell, in which the Bodies of the curſed ſhall be always burning, but never be burnt out. Concerning this you may read *Tertullian*, *Minutius*, and *Pacian*. See, O Man, how providently even Nature her ſelf doth go before thee, and as it were lead thee by the hand to the Contemplation of *Eternity*.

Tertul. Apol. c. 48. Minut. in Oct. Pacian. de pœnitent. & confeſſ.

To

To conclude, This *Time* of ours carrieth with it some sign and print of *Eternity*. Nature fain would have us learn the thing signified by the sign, and take a scantling of *Eternity* by the little *module* and measure of time. It is the saying of St. *Augustine*, *This is the difference* between things *Temporal* and *Eternal*: We love things *Temporal* more before we have them, and esteem them not so much when we have them: For the Soul cannot be satisfied but with true and secure *Eternity*, and Joy which is *Eternal* and incorruptible. But things *Eternal*, when they are actually *possessed*, are much more loved than before when they were only desired and hoped for: For neither could *Faith* believe, nor *Hope* expect so much as *Charity* and *Love* shall find when once we shall be admitted to possession. Why then doth not Earth seem vile in our Eyes, especially when we must ere long forsake it? And why do we not with ardent desire lift up our Eyes to Heaven where we shall inherit a Kingdom, and that *Eternal*.

In Sent. sen. 270.

THE

Thou art weighed in the ballances and art found wanting. Dan: 5. 27.

That man regardeth not Eternitie, who weigheth his money more accurately then his life.

THE THIRD CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

Wherein the old Romans *principally placed their Eternity.*

Plinius Secundus thought those Men happy, which either did things worthy to be wrote, or wrote things worthy to be read; but those Men of all most happy, which could do both. So the *Romans* thought they might three manner of ways eternize their Fame, and transmit their Names unto Posterity. First they wrote many excellent things; *many* excellent indeed, but *not all*; not all chast, not all holy: They committed to writing their own Blemishes, their dishoneſt Loves, and filthy Lusts: But this was no honeſt or Kings high way to *Eternity*. How many Books have died before their Authors, and according to *Plato*, have been like unto the Gardens *Epist.* 2. *ad Tat.*

dens of *Adonis*: as soon dead as sprung up! They pleased not long which quickly pleased. But suppose the Books of all the *Romans* should out-live time, and be always extant, and exposed to publick view, yet they should not be able to give Life unto their Authors.

Again, the *Romans* did not only write, but also did many brave Works worthy to be recorded by the Pens of Eloquent and Learned Men, and these Works were of divers kinds. They sought *Eternity* in many things, but found it in nothing, as we are taught to believe. They were great (we do not deny it) in civil and warlike Affairs, at home and abroad: Admirable for their Skill in Arts and Sciences: Magnificent and profuse in setting forth Shews, and bestowing Gifts: Wonderful even to astonishment for stately Buildings, Tombs, Vaults, Monuments and Statues, as you may guess by these few particulars, which I will briefly run over.

Augustus, in his own Name, and at his own proper Charges, set forth Plays and Games four and twenty times, and at the Charge of the common Treasury, three and twenty times; and never a one of those cost him under two Millions and five hundred Thousand Crowns: And this so great a sum of Money, I say, was all laid out upon

upon one ſhew. The very meaneſt and cheapeſt that ever *Auguſtus* ſet forth, came to a Million two Hundred and fifty Thouſand Crowns.

Nero gilded over the whole *Theatre*; the Ornaments of the tyring Houſe and Comical Implements he made all of Gold: To theſe you may add ſquare pieces of Wood or wooden Lots ſcattered amongſt the People, which had for their Inſcriptions, whole Houſes, Fields, Grounds, Farms, Slaves, Servants, Beaſts, great ſums of Silver, and many times Jewels a great number: To whoſoevers Lot fell any one of theſe, he preſently received according to the Inſcription.

The ſame *Nero* for a Donative to a common Soldier, commanded to be told two hundred and fifty Thouſand Crowns.

Agrippina (*Nero*'s Mother) cauſeth the like ſum of Money to be laid upon a Table, thereby ſecretly reprehending and labouring to reſtrain her Sons profuſeneſs. Whereupon *Nero* perceiving that he was toucht, commanded another ſum to be added as great as the former, and ſaid thus; *Neſciebam me tam parum dediſſe, I forgot my ſelf in giving ſo little.*

The ſame *Nero* entertained at *Rome* for nine Months together King *Tiridates*, and was every day at coſt for him twenty Thouſand

ſand Crowns, which came in nine Months to five Millions and forty thouſand Crowns. And at his departure he gave him for a *Viaticum*, or to ſpend by the way, two Millions and an half. What ſhould I tell you of their ſtately and magnificent Buildings?

Caligula the Emperour made a Bridge over an Arm of the Sea, three Miles long.

There were Temples in *Rome* four hundred twenty four, moſt of them were magnificent.

Domitian ſpent upon the ſole Gilding of the Capitol, ſeven Millions.

On the Stairs of the *Ampitheater*, which were made all of Stone, there might ſit very conveniently, fourſcore and ſeven Thouſand Spectators; above, there might ſtand round about twelve Thouſand. In all fourſcore and nineteen Thouſand.

Beſides many others, there were twelve publick Baths made by the Emperor, where Men might bathe *gratis*.

In the hot Baths of *Antonius*, there were of poliſhed Stone one Thouſand and ſix Hundred Seats, and there might ſo many Men bathe themſelves very conveniently.

In the Bath of *Hetruſcus*, as *Pliny* ſaith, all were of Silver, the paſſages for the Wa-

ter,

ter, the lips of the Bath, and the very floor it ſelf. But I paſs to other things.

At *Rome* there was almoſt as many Statues as Men, of no worſe matter than Silver and Gold, beſide infinite others of Braſs, Marble, and Ivory.

Domitian had one of Gold in the Capitol, of an hundred pound weight.

Commodus and *Claudius* had alſo Statues of Gold, each of them being of a thouſand pound weight. *Claudius* had alſo in the place at *Rome* called *Roſtra*, another of Silver. Hereupon there was a certain Officer appointed, who was called the Count of *Rome*, on whom there attended a great many Souldiers continually to guard and look to the great number of Statues.

The way which is called *Appia*, will exerciſe a nimble Footman five days in running it over. It reached in length, from *Rome* to *Capua*; ſo broad, that two Coaches might meet, and never trouble one another; ſo ſolid and firm, as if it were all of one Stone, in no place looſe or broken up There were alſo more ways like unto this. It is incredible what good Authors do write of their Conduits and Aquæducts.

Claudius the Emperour beſtowed about one, ſeven Millions of Gold and a half: and there were maintained ſix hundred Men with the only keeping and looking to the

the waters. These were great works indeed, but the Authors thereof in part deserved reprehension for their immoderate profuseness. There was at *Rome* one thing that surpassed their stately buildings, but (as for name, to say no worse, and to spare your ears) dishonourable, and not fit to be named. They had certain Vaults under-earth built with Arches, you may call them the sinks of the City (they called them *Cloacas*) running with water, to carry away all the filth of the City. Of these there were so many, so large, and so long, that you may well reckon them amongst the wonders of the World. I need not instance any more; these which I have named are sufficient. He that is any thing conversant in Histories, or hath heard of the great power and wealth of the *Romans* in former ages, will easily believe my relation: if he will not believe me, let him believe the testimony of *Suetonius*, *Dion Cassius*, *Pliny*, *Livy*, and others that have wrote of the *Roman* Monuments.

These things which I have reckoned up, are very laudable in themselves. But they governed their Common-wealth so prudently, that in War for the most part they were unconquerable, for Arts and Sciences excellent, for Vertue illustrious; in-

inſomuch, that *Cyneas* an Ambaſſador ſent from *Pyrrhus*, a very eloquent and intelligent Man, when he had all in vain ſolicited the City to make a League with his Lord and Maſter, which League could not ſtand with the honour of the *Romans*, upon his return told the King, That he thought the *City* to be a *Temple*, and all the *Senators*, *Kings*. Herein the *Romans* were highly to be commended; but in this they were much overſeen (though otherwiſe very prudent Men) in placing their *Eternity* in ſuch things as neither could give unto them, nor had in themſelves *Eternity*. If the *Romans* had made choice of Saint *Auguſtine* for their guide in the way to *Eternity*, he would have ſhewed them a more certain and readier way. For what ſaith he? *We do not account thoſe Emperors happy which have reigned long, or which have often triumphed as Conquerors over their Enemies, or which have treaſured up much wealth. Theſe things often happen to thoſe that have no right or title to the Kingdom which is Eternal.* Who then in Saint *Auguſtine*'s Opinion are to be accounted truly happy? Hearken, O ye Emperors, O ye Kings and Princes: You ſhall in Saint *Auguſtin's ſenſe* obtain true and *Eternal* happineſs, by the obſervation of theſe Rules following.

1. The Rule of *Justice*. By ruling justly, and hating the very vizard and painted face of Injustice.

2. The Rule of *Modesty*. By not being puffed up by the vain Applauses, Acclamations and Titles of Honour, but by remembring your selves to be but Men.

3. The Rule of the *Fear* and *Love of God*. By propagating by all means the true Worship of God; by subjecting all Humane Power to his Divine Majesty; by serving him in *fear* and *love*.

4. The *Desire of Heaven*. By setting your love and affection upon the Kingdom which is *Eternal*, where one shall not envy anothers power.

5. The Rule of *Facility*, and *readiness to forgive*. By being swift to forgive, and slow to punish, but when the Glory of God, and the Necessity of the Common-wealth calleth for it.

6. *Mercy* and *Liberality*. By tempering the severity of the Laws by the Oyl of Mercy, and the sweet Odour of Beneficency.

7. *Continency*. By not giving the Reins to Luxury, but by bridling your Appetites and Concupiscences; and the more liberty you have, the less abusing it unto Licentiousness.

8. *Moderation of Passions*. By choosing rather

rather to get the conqueſt over evil Paſſions, than by domineering over Nations.

9. The ſtudy of *Humility* and *Prayer*. By doing all theſe, not for vain glory, but for the glory of God, and the attainment of *Eternal* felicity: and again, by never neglecting that moſt noble ſacrifice of *Humility* and *Prayer*.

Theſe Rules or Laws hath St. *Auguſtine* fixed upon the double gates of the World, are a glaſs fit for Princes to look into. But, O ye *Romans*, how far have ye gone aſtray from the way that leadeth unto the gates whereon theſe Laws are fixed! Not to ſpeak of other things, you have inſtead of one and the only true God, brought in innumerable others, to Worſhip them which are no Gods. For *Rome* ſeemeth to make it a great matter of Religion, to refuſe no falſity; and when ſhe ruleth almoſt over all nations, to ſerve and follow the errors of all Nations.

But to let theſe things paſs alſo: how vain and ridiculous a thing is it, for them to leave behind them all their *Eternity* in Parchments and Papers, in Marble and other Stone, in Theaters and Pyramids, in Monuments and Tombs! What is now become of their *Eternity* which was ſometime carved in Stone? The ſame hath

hapned unto *Rome*, which also befel *Jeruſalem*. The Diſciples pointing at the buildings of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, ſaid unto our Saviour Chriſt, *Maſter, See what manner of ſtones, and what buildings are here!* Mark 13. 1. Whereupon Chriſt anſwered and ſaid, *See ye all theſe buildings? Verily I ſay unto you, There ſhall not be left here one ſtone upon another, that ſhall not be thrown down*, Matth. 24. 2. So there is nothing *Eternal* in this World. And where is now old *Rome*? If this queſtion be demanded; the anſwer may be this, *Here it was*. Where are they that built it? *They are dead and gone*. There is not ſo much as their aſhes left of them. And ere long we muſt all go the ſame way, become like a ſhadow, return unto duſt, and be diſſolved into nothing. Oh the poor and mean condition of mortal Men, even at the greateſt! Oh the inſtability and frailty of the ſtrongeſt Men, even in the prime of all their ſtrength! For what is now become of all thoſe things, or where are they? *They are quite vaniſhed away*. Where is their Mony, which they heaped up beyond belief? *'Tis ſcattered abroad*. Where are their ſtately and lofty buildings? *They are not to be ſeen*. Such are all things elſe, though to us they ſeem never ſo great, nothing elſe but a meer ſhadow and a dream,

if

if they be compared with *Eternity*, and those things which are *Eternal*. The foundation on which the whole fabrick of vanishing glory is set up, is too weak and mouldering, and made but of Clay, Stone and Marble, cannot be ingraven with Characters and Inscriptions of *Eternity*. Well saith *Lactantius*, *The works of mortal men are mortal*. That there was a *Babylon*, a *Troy*, a *Carthage*, and a *Rome*, we believe: But if we will believe no more than we see, there be scarce any reliques or ruinous parts of them remaining, to perswade us that there were such Cities. So the seven wonders of the world, so *Nero*'s golden Palace, *Diocletian*'s hot Baths, *Antonius* his Baths, *Severus* his Septizonium, *Julius* his Colossus, *Pompey*'s Amphitheater, have no footstep or print of them remaining; no, scarce upon Record, or registered in Books. And how far have all of these come short of *Eternity*.

CHAP. I.

How far the Romans *have gone astray from the true way of Eternity.*

AT *Nazareth*, in a certain Conclave, called by the Name of the Blessed Virgin, there is in one place mention made

of a Kingdom, *Of which Kingdom there shall be no end*, Luke 1. 33. Such was not the Kingdom of *Solomon*: for that lasted but four hundred years, even to the Captivity of *Babylon*. Such was not the Kingdom of the *Romans*, neither of the *Persians*, nor yet of the *Grecians*. For where are now those Kingdoms in former times most flourishing? Where are those most antient Monarchies? How great was *Nebuchadnezzer* in *Chaldea* and *Syria*, and after him *Belshazzar*? From them the Scepter was translated unto the *Medes* and *Persians*, to *Cirus* and *Darius*, neither continued it there long. From thence it was translated into *Greece*, to *Alexander*, surnamed the *Great*, King of *Macedon*, for a long time most victorious and fortunate. But as warlike valour decayed, so fortune failed. And so the Sceptre was translated into *Italy* to *Julius Cæsar*, and *Octavianus Augustus*. What is become of all these Kings? Where are they? But thou, O Christian man, seek that Kingdom, *Of which Kingdom there shall be no end*. *Numantia*, *Athens*, *Carthage*, and *Sparta*, all are come to an end, they are utterly perished. But as for the Kingdom which is above. *Of that there shall be no end*. The King that ruleth there is *Eternal*, and those that live in that Kingdom are *Eternal*. *The Lord shall reign for ever and ever*, Exod. 15. 14. On which words,

words, ſaith *Origen*, *Doſt thou think that the Lord ſhall reign for ever and ever? Yea, he ſhall reign for ever and ever, and beyond that too.* Say what thou canſt, thou ſhalt ſtill come ſhort of the duration of his Kingdom: the Prophet will ſtill add ſomething, as for example, after *for ever*, yet more, *and ever*, or, *beyond that too.* And yet, ſaith *Iſidore*, though this Kingdom be *Eternal*, though infinite, though every way bleſſed, though it be promiſed to us, not a word of that. For what Man is there of a thouſand that ſpends the leaſt part of a day in meditating upon that? That ever once makes mention of that? That ever inſtructs his Wife, his Children, and his Servants concerning that? We prattle much of all other things; but as for Heaven, there is ſcarce any mention made of that; or if there be, ſurely it is very rare. In ſetting forth the commendation of his own Country, every Man is a nimble-tongued Orator: But as for that which is our true Country indeed, we bluſh and are almoſt aſhamed, being too modeſt in commending that. For it is come to paſs in theſe days, by the diſuſe of holy Conference, that Men think themſelves not witty nor facete enough, unleſs they ſpeak idle and unprofitable Words, and make fooliſh Jeſts; nay, that is not all, unleſs their

Cheeks swell, and their Lips run over with filthy and unsavoury speeches. Oh! This is to go astray quite out of the way. But let our Hearts and Mouths be filled with the praise and desire of things *Eternal*; let our thoughts and words always run after them: We have no other way to true Glory, but this; and there is no true Glory, but that which is *Eternal*.

The chief Priests and the Pharisees amongst the *Jews*, to overthrow Christ's Power (as they thought) and to eternize their Politick Government, assembled themselves together in Council; and by their foolish Wisdom (as it proved) made Decrees to their own hurt. Elegantly speaketh St. *Augustine* of them, Consulting and Deliberating together in full Court: The chief Priests, saith he, and the Pharisees took Counsel together what they should do for their own good, and yet they said not *Let us believe*. The wicked and ungodly Men sought more how to hurt and to destroy, than how to provide for their own security, that they might be saved. And yet they were in fear and in counsel: For they said, *What do we? For this man doth many Miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him. And the* Romans *shall come, and take away both our Place and Nation,*

Augustl.

Nation, John 11. 47, 48. They were afraid to loſe things *Temporal*, and never thought upon the life which is *Eternal*: and ſo they loſt both. Such is the vanity, and affected mockery of our fooliſh cogitations. What are we? and what is all that we call ours? *To day* we flouriſh like a flower, we are well ſpoken of, we pleaſe, and are in favour with Men: But (alas!) *to-morrow* our flower will fade, we ſhall be ill ſpoken of, and out of favour with God and Man: Man whom hitherto we pleaſed; and God, whom we never ſtudied for to pleaſe. We neglect Heaven, and keep not Earth: We get not the favour of God, and loſe the Worlds favour. And ſo we are moſt deplorably miſerable, and deſtitute on both ſides. If death would but ſpare thoſe that are the happy ones of this World, it may be they might find here ſome glory: ſome, I ſay, ſuch as it is; for there is none true but that which is in Heaven, and *Eternal*. But (alas!) death ſpares no Man; ſees in the dark, and is not ſeen; and watches his time when he may ſet upon us, when we think not of him. What ſhall become of us? Whether will he carry us, if here we have lived wickedly? To the bar of Chriſt's judgment, and from thence to the pit of Hell; and from thence there is no re-

demption. Nobility from thence sets no man free: Power delivers no man. The applause of men formerly given, yields there no comfort. Let us here seek the favour of God and his glory. That is the true glory which is got by the shunning of vain glory; and there is no true glory but that which is *Eternal*.

Prov. 3. 13. *Solomon* in the *Proverbs* describeth *Wisdom* like a Queen, attended by two waiting-maids *Eternity* and *Glory*; the first on the right hand, the second on the left. *Glory* is nothing worth, if there be not joyned with it *Eternity*; that which all we Christians do expect. *For here we have no continuing City, but we seek one to come, Eternal in the heavens. The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance*, Heb. 13. 14. 2 Cor. 5. 1. Psal. 112. 6. To give an Alms to a poor Man, to moderate a greedy appetite, to resist an enemy of Chastity, these are works that require not much pains, or time for the doing; and yet the remembrance of these, together with their reward, shall be *Eternal*. What a small thing was it that *Mary Magdalen* bestowed upon our Saviours feet! How quickly had she done it! And yet it is made known *throughout the whole World*, Matth. 26. 13. Some others, it may be, would have admired

mired other things in her, her cherry Cheeks, her comely Countenance, the pleasant flower of her Youth, her rare Grace, her great Riches, her Affability and Courtesie, and such like. These were not the things which Christ commends in her; but it was the Office which she performed unto his Feet. The thing it self was not great; and yet it was a means to procure for her *Eternal* Glory, and a never-dying Name *It shall we preacht throughout the whole World*: This is the Testimony of Christ. This work of hers was not ingraven in Marble, nor cast in Brass, nor promulged in the Market-place, nor proclaimed with a Drum and a Trumpet, and yet it hath continued for a memorial of her to this day, and so shall for ever, and *It shall be preached throughout the whole World.* If you consider the *Action* it self, *Judas Iscariot* the covetous Purse-bearer found fault with it: *Simon* the swelling and proud Pharisee condemned it: If the *matter*, it was but an Ointment, at the most not worth above thirty small pieces of Gold: If the *place*; it was private: If the *witnesses* present; they were but few: If the *person*; she was a Woman, and one infamous: And yet for all these, *It shall be preached throughout the whole World.* How many Emperors have advanced their

Colours.

Colours displayed, their victorious and triumphant Eagles, and set up their Standards in their Enemies Camp! How many warlike Captains have led popular Armies, and commanded them worthily! How many provident Governours have ruled their People very wisely! How many Kings have erected rare Monuments, and Statues, and built Castles and Cities! How many learned Men have wasted their Brains in new Inventions, and have like *Chymists*, distilled them into *Receivers* of Paper! And to what end all this? To keep their Names in continual remembrance, and to be recorded amongst worthy and memorable Men. And yet notwithstanding they lodge in the bed of silence, and lie buried in the grave of oblivion. But one good work that the righteous doth, shall be had in everlasting remembrance: Time and Envy shall never deface and conceal it; the wisest Men, Captains, Prelates, and Kings themselves, shall with reverence read and hear it. *It shall be preached throughout the whole World:*

The only way then to Immortality and true *Eternity* is, to live well, and so to die well. Go to now, ye *Romans*, if ye will seek *Eternity* in Statues and Marble Monuments: but you shall never find it there. I for

for my part will wish rather with St. *Hierome*, in the Life of *Paul* the *Eremite*, Oh remember, saith he, *Hierome* a Sinner, who if God had given him the choice, would have preferred the poor Cloak of *Paul* with his good Works, before the Scarlet Robes of Kings with their Kingdoms. Let us Christians here, whilest we have time, make over our Riches; for fear lest we lose them, let us send them before us into another World: Heaven stands open, ready to receive them. We need not doubt of the safe carriage: the Carriers are very faithful and trusty; but they are the poor and needy of this World. We make over unto them here by way of exchange a few things of little value, being to receive in Heaven an *exceeding Eternal weight of Glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. For so hath Christ promised upon the performance of this Precept. *I say unto you, Make to your selves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness: that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.* But let us pass from the *Romans* unto others.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

A better way than the former which the Romans *followed to* Eternity.

Darius the King of the *Persians*, most notable for his Slaughter, had in his Army Ten Thousand *Persians*, which he therefore called immortal, (as *Cælius Rhodiginus* interpreteth it) not because he thought they should never dye, (for where are there any such?) but because as any of the number was diminished by sword or sickness, it was presently made up; so that still there was neither more nor less than Ten Thousand. Thus *Darius* framed unto himself a kind of Immortality and *Eternity*: But (alas!) it was a very short one; for within a little space, he and all his Army utterly perished. *The Presidents and Princes assembled together unto Darius, and said thus unto him, King Darius, Live for ever*, Dan. 6. 6. Alas! How vain was this Wish, and how short this *Eternity?* We live but seventy or eighty Years at the most: We are but in a Dream, if we think to live here for ever. Not without cause therefore *Xerxes*, (when for the conquering and subjugating *Greece*

Cæl. Rhodigin. lib. 8. cap. 2. & l. 25. cap. 1.

Greece (as *Herodotus* reports) he carried with him out of *Asia* two great Armies both by Sea and Land (in number three and twenty hundred thousand, seventeen thousand, and six hundred, besides others that attended upon Soldiers) upon a day taking his prospect from a Mountain, and beholding his Souldiers, fell a weeping; and being asked the reason why, he said it was, Because after a matter of fifty or sixty years, of so many hundred thousand Men so elect and strong, scarce one should be found alive.

We may Dream, and feign unto our selves, I know not what *Eternities*: But in the mean time *we must needs die and are as water spilt upon the ground.* 2. Sam. 14. 14.

Another and better type of *Eterniny* was found out at *Constantinople*, in the Year of our Lord 459. The Church of *Constantinople*, in the time when *Gennadius* was Bishop, was augmented by a new and noble foundation of a Monastery of *Acœmets* dedicated to Saint *John Baptist*. These *Acœmets* were so called for not sleeping, because they were never all at once to sleep, but still to be exercised in their course night and day in singing praises unto God. These *Acœmets* were divided after this manner into three Companies:

panies: so that when the first company had made an end of singing divine praises, the second should begin; and when the second had made an end, the third should begin. By means of this godly institution, the City had in some sort heaven within it self always sounding with the praises of God; or at least a Type or representation of the *Eternity* in Heaven, where God shall be praised for all *Eternity*, with great delight and cheerfulness, and without all weariness. Therefore hath the *Psalmist* good cause to cry out, *Blessed are they which dwell in thy House, they will still be praising Thee*, Psalm 84. 4. Then shall all the blessed say, as *Peter* did upon the Mountain, *It is good for us to be here*, Matth. 17. 4. For, as St. *Bernard* speaketh, *Eternity* is true riches without measure: but he adds this withal, It is not found, unless it be sought with perseverance. But how shall we so seek that we may obtain it? Hear what the good Father saith: By *Poverty*, by *Meekness*, and by *Tears*, there is renewed in the Soul the stamp and image of *Eternity*, which comprehendeth all times. First, *Poverty* is the way to *Eternity*. *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 5. 3.

Bernard Serm. 2. de Om. S. S.

Where

Where poor Men are diſperſed and forſaken, there is the Heart and the Money locked up together in the Cheſt: Where Money is expended according to the Rules of *Avarice*, there is no affect or love of Poverty, there is no deſire or love of *Eternity*. Secondly, *Meekneſs*: By *Meekneſs* we make our ſelves ſecure of things preſent, and have an aſſurance of things to come. *Bleſſed are the meek, for they ſhall inherit the earth*, Mat. 5. 5. If any man ask, What ſhall we ſay of him that is void of *Meekneſs* and *Patience*, that can ſcarce at any time ſpeak a mild word? What gains he by his implacable impatience? What doth it profit him to rage and fret with Indignation, to make Outcries and Tumults, to ſhew his Will to do Miſchief, though he cannot effect what he would; or to conclude, to ſalute no Man civilly, as if he were an enemy to all Humanity and Affability? What ſhall we ſay of ſuch a Man? If there be any ſuch, he is ſure to ſuffer loſs of Goods, or good Name, or both. For the Riches which he hath, he poſſeſſeth not, but keeps them like a Dog, whoſe property is to bark at a Man, to fly upon him, and to bite him: As for his good Name, if he have any, he ſhall not augment it by the title of Impatience: And as for Heaven, he loſeth that before he hath taken poſſeſſion

poſſeſſion of it. Thirdly, *Tears*. For by weeping and mourning we redeem the time paſt, we recover what we prodigally ſpent by ſinning. But this mourning and ſorrow muſt not laſt for an hour only, or for a day: for this is nothing elſe but to do as he did, who at his Mothers Death, put on Mourning-clothes, forced for the preſent a few Tears, and ſo went along after the Biere, and left her not till he ſaw her buried; but the ſame day, or the next day after, wiped away all Tears from his Eyes, changed his weeping into laughing, caſt off his Mourning-clothes, and put on Colours. This is not to mourn in good earneſt, to make an end of mourning ſo ſuddenly. But this we do (alas!) too often. To day we make publick Confeſſion of our Sins to God, and hear Abſolution; we repent us of our Sins, and receive the Holy Communion; and within a day after we ſin again with delight, and without fear, and oftentimes more grievouſly than before. We deteſt for the preſent the wicked courſe of our Life paſt; and we return again to the ſame paſs. We forſwear the Sins which we formerly committed; and again the ſame day we commit the ſame. So with the ſame Tongue we proclaim Chriſt innocent, and crucifie him afreſh, as if we were the true Brothers

of

of *Pontius Pilate*, who with one and the ſame mouth did both abſolve him and condemn him, confeſſing that he *found no cauſe of death in him*, Luke 23. 22, 24. And yet adjudging him to be crucified. We are very fickle and inconſtant, but in nothing more conſtant than in the repetition of a vicious courſe of Life. Alas! alas! we carry too much of the *Moon*, that is, **Inconſtancy** in our **Breaſt**. Sometimes we are ſo zealous and ſo holy, that we will not admit of a cheerful countenance, for fear leſt it ſhould hinder our ſanctity and devotion: we look demurely, caſting our eyes down to the ground, and bait the brows, as being angry with our ſelves, when we find in our ſelves the leaſt remiſsneſs or coldneſs in holy duties. But this ſanctity and devotion doth never continue long: after a while we begin to hate even piety it ſelf: and the Stream being turned, we turn again to our former riot and intemperance; and we are ready to diſſolve the knot of friendſhip made betwixt God and us, as at the firſt we were unwilling to have it knit At length *Piety*, attended with *ſorrow* and *repentance*, preſents her ſelf again unto us, and puts to flight laſciviouſneſs, until the time comes that we begin to *repent* us of our *repentance*. So we ſeldom continue long in any honeſt and godly courſe, for it,

it seems unto us too laborious: and at every light beck we row down the stream of our former uncleanness. Such is the inconstancy of our life, that it presents unto our minds all sorts of pleasures and vices. We make an outward shew of adoring vertue; but in heart and mind we fall down and worship vice; a most laborious kind of service. This is not the way unto *Eternity*, unless it be of punishment and torments which shall have no end.

Let us single out one Christian man of many, and such a one especially as is most addicted to his pleasure; let us carry him along with us to the mouth of a Furnace red hot and flaming: and then let us begin to question him after this manner: How much pleasure wouldest thou ask to continue burning in this Furnace for one day? He will answer to this undoubtedly, I would not be tormented in these flames for one day, to gain the whole world, and all the pleasures in the world. But let us propound another condition unto him: What reward wouldst thou ask to endure this fire only for half a day? Propound what reward you will, there is nothing so delicate, so precious, so dear unto me, which I would be willing to buy at so dear a price, as these torments. But to try once more, What reward and pleasure wouldst thou ask

ask to go into this furnace, and to ſtay there but one hour? His anſwer will certainly be this, Let the moſt covetous and impudent man in the World ask what he can, that is not to be compared with the unutterable and unſufferable ſcorchings and torments of this fire, though they ſhould laſt but for one hour. If theſe anſwers be good and agreeable to rght reaſon, How comes it to paſs, O God, that for a little gain, and that but vile, for deceitful honour, and that fugitive, for filthy pleaſures, and that not long, ſo many men ſo little regard, *Eternal* puniſhment in Hell fire! We cannot be perſwaded with any reward, no, though it be to gain a whole World, to ſtay but for one hour in fire *Temporal:* and yet, if either gain at any time invited us, or if honour ſmileth upon us, or pleaſure allureth us, we never fear Hell and fire *Eternal.* But thou wilt ſay, I hope for better; God is merciful, and his goodneſs will not ſuffer me to diſpair, or to be terrified with the fear of evil to come. So indeed we are wont to ſpeak: and the words in themſelves are not impious, if our works were pious. But for the moſt part our works are ſuch, that if we rightly conſider them we have little cauſe to hope for mercy. It is a very dangerous and fooliſh part, for a man to live in a conſtant courſe of ungodlineſs,

and

and to hope for *Eternity* amongſt the bleſſed. Alas! one ſin is ſufficient to condemn us. Knoweſt thou not what Chriſt hath threatned in the Goſpel? *Whoſoever ſhall ſay unto his brother, Thou Fool, ſhall be in danger of hell fire*, Matth. 5. 22. Knoweſt thou not what Chriſt hath forbidden? *Whoſoever looketh upon a woman to luſt after her, hath committed Adultry with her already in his heart*, v. 28. Knoweſt thou not what Chriſt hath premoniſhed? *Not every one that ſaith, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: but he which doth the Will of my Father which is in heaven.* Matth. 7. 21. Knoweſt thou not that Chriſt hath ſhut many out of the gate? *He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me: And he that taketh not his croſs and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.* Matth. 10. 37, 38. Knoweſt thou not what Chriſt hath openly and plainly ſaid, and again repeated? *Many be called, but few choſen:* Matth. 20, 16. and 22. *Few* indeed, yea very *few*. Knoweſt thou not how often Chriſt hath exhorted to amendment of life? *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 18. 3. *If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and caſt them from thee: It is better for thee to enter into life, halt and maimed, rather than having*

two hands, or two feet, to be caſt into everlaſting fire. v. 8. *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh,* Luke 13. 3. And not long after, *Strive to enter in at the ſtraight gate: for many, I ſay unto you, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able,* ver. 24. Knoweſt thou not how expreſly St. *Paul* recites up all thoſe things that hinder us from entring into that bleſſed *Eternity? The works of the fleſh are manifeſt, which are theſe, Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Hereſies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenneſs, Revellings, and ſuch like: Of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time paſt, That they which do ſuch things, ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. Now if any Man be guilty to himſelf of any one of theſe Sins here reckoned up, and is not ſo grieved for it, that he ſeeks by all means poſſible to avoid it for the time to come, he may ſing to himſelf if he will, this vain *Spero*, I hope, and I hope: But this Man's hope is indeed none at all, but mere raſhneſs and preſumption. For a Man to adventure the danger of ſtripes and blows, is an evil that may be born. To loſe at play an hundred or a thouſand Florens, is a great misfortune, but may be indured. To lay his head

head at ſtake, and to bring his Life in danger, is a bad adventure; but at the worſt it is but loſs of Life, and that loſs is not of all other the greateſt. But to hazard the Eternal Salvation both of Body and Soul, by living at uncertainties, by hoping in words, and deſpairing in works, nullifying hope by a wicked and ungodly Life: This is the moſt extreameſt of all evils: This is the moſt grievous misfortune a Man can fall into: This is moſt pernicious raſhneſs and boldneſs: This is extream folly and madneſs. *Now conſider this, ye that forget God, leaſt he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you*, Pſal. 50. 22.

CHAP. III.

That the way of Eternity *is diligently and carefully to be ſought after.*

LET every Chriſtian Man therefore often ask himſelf, and others alſo which are in the place of God, this queſtion, What ſhall I do that I may obtain bleſſed *Eternity*, or *Eternal* Bleſſedneſs? Am I in the right way that leadeth unto *Eternity?* Something I do indeed, but it is but very little, and not worth ſpeaking of, I thirſt and breathe after the Joys which are Immortal and *Eternal*; but few are my works, cold and imperfect at the beſt, and altogether

altogether unworthy of an *Eternal* reward. I think it long till I arrive at the haven, but I am afraid of the troubleſom waves and tempeſts by the way; when as yet notwithſtanding that is the ſafeſt and beſt way unto heaven, which is moſt rough and narrow. This is the very truth it ſelf that Gods mouth pronounceth, and Chriſt proclaimeth, ſaying, *Enter ye in at the ſtrait gate: For wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be* (alack! too many) *that go in thereat. Becauſe ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be* (alack too few!) *that find it*, Matth. 17. 13, 14. Again, *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate: For many, I ſay unto you will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able*, Luke 13. 24. O what a fearful word is that, MANY; and that FEW! How ſhould it make us tremble! But we miſerable men deceive our ſelves, raſhly promiſing unto our ſelves *Eternity*: and yet I cannot tell whether we may be more truly ſaid to hope, or to dream, that we ſhall be reckoned amongſt thoſe few before mentioned. Would to God *now*, even *now* whileſt *it is the accepted time*, and *the day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. We would have a diligent and an intent eye upon *Eternity*, and reaſon thus with our ſelves:

Alas! What is all this that I suffer; Or that I see others suffer? It is nothing if it be compared with *Eternity*. What if I could reckon up as many labours and perils as Saint *Paul* himself did undergo, as they are by him set down in his second Epistle to the *Corinthians*, and the eleventh Chapter? 2 *Cor.* 11. 27. If I should endure *hunger* and *thirst*, enmities and injuries, sickness and poverty? Yea, more, what if I were *stoned* with Saint *Paul*, and *beaten with rods*? What if I *suffered shipwrack*? *ver.* 25. All these are nothing to punishments *Eternal*. Therefore in all adversity, I must thus think with my self, I shall *see an end of all*, Psal. 119. 96.

The Prophet *Daniel* having reckoned up sundry calamities, at length added these words, *Even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed*, Dan. 11. 35. Come hither, come hither all ye that are in affliction, in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other calamity. Why do you drown your selves in your own tears? Why do you make your life bitter unto you with impatience and complaining? Here is comfort for you, great comfort drawn from the time of that suffering. Are divers calamities upon you? Be not cast down: have a good courage: they shall continue only *for a time*: Do ye suffer contumely and re-

proach

proach? Are ye wearied with Injuries? Are others Troubles multiplied upon you? Ceaſe to lament; all theſe ſhall laſt but *for a time*; they ſhall not laſt *for ever*; your ſighing ſhall have an end.

Tears may diſtill from your Eyes *for a time*; but Sighs and Groans ſhall not ariſe from your Hearts *for ever*. The time is at hand, when you ſhall be delivered from all Grief, and be tranſlated unto Everlaſting Happineſs. This is moſt clear by that in *Eccleſiaſticus*, *A patient Man will bear for a time, and afterward joy ſhall ſpring up unto him.* Eccleſ. 1. 23. But ye alſo which think your ſelves the only happy Men on Earth, and the Darlings of the World, know thus much, and be not proud, neither lift up your Horn: All your ſeeming Happineſs (for it is no more at the beſt) hath but ſhort and narrow bounds and limits, and is quickly paſſed over. Your triumphing is but *for a time*; your golden Dreams laſt but *for a time*; after a time, and that not long, Death will command you to put off Fortunes painted Vizard, and ſtand among the croud. Then ſhall ye truly appear ſo much the more unhappy, by how much the more ye ſeemed to your ſelves before, in your own fooliſh Imaginations, moſt happy. Therefore whether Sorrow or Joy, all is but *for a time* in this World.

It is *Eternity* alone which is not concluded within any bounds of time. Whether therefore the Body suffer or the Mind; whether we lose Riches or Honours; whether our Patience be exercised by Sorrow or Grief, Cares, or any Afflictions, inward or outward, all is but painted and momentary, if we think upon *Eternal* Punishments. For when fifty thousand Years shall be passed after the Day of Judgment, there shall still remain fifty thousand Millions of Years; and when those likewise are passed, there shall still remain more and more, and yet more Millions of Years, and there shall never be an end. But who thinks upon these things? Who weighs and considers them well with himself? Sometimes we seem to have savour of things *Eternal*: But we are tossed up and down with the motions and thoughts of things past, and things future; our Heart wavereth, and is full of Vanity. Who will establish it, and set it in a sure place, that it may stand a while, and standing admire, and admiring be ravisht with the splendor of *Eternity*, which always stands, and never passeth away? Well did *Myrogenes*, when *Eustachius* Archbishop of *Jerusalem* sent Gifts unto him, he did very well, I say, in refusing them, and

August. lib. 11. *conf. cap.* 11.

and saying, Do but one thing for me, Only pray for me, that I may be delivered from *Eternal* Torment. Neither was *Tully* out of the way when he said, No humane thing can seem great unto a wise Man, who hath the knowledge of all *Eternity*, and of the magnitude of the whole World. But *Francis*, the Author of the Order of the *Franciscans*, hath a saying far better than that of *Tully*, The Pleasure that is here, saith he, is but short; but the Punishment that shall be hereafter, is infinite: The Labour that is here, is but small; but the Glory which shall be hereafter, is *Eternal*. Take your choice. Many are called, few chosen, but all rewarded according to their Works.

Tull. Tusc. quæst. lib. 3.

Let us hasten our Repentance therefore, whilst we have time. It is better, saith *Guericus*, to be purged by Water, than by Fire, and it is far easier. Now is the time for Repentance: Let our timely Repentance therefore prevent Punishment. Whosoever is afraid of the Hoar-frost, the Snow shall fall upon him; he which feareth the lesser detriment, shall suffer a greater; he which will not undergo the light burden of Repentance, shall be forced to undergo the most heavy burthen and most

Guerr. Serm. de Purif.

grievous Punishment of Hell. St. *Gregory* hath a saying to this purpose; Some, saith he, whilest they are afraid of *Temporal* Punishments, run themselves upon *Eternal* Punishment. Hither we may add that of *Pacian*; Remember, saith he, that in Hell there is no place for Confession of Sins, no place for Repentance; for then it is too late to repent, and the time is past. Make haste therefore whilst you are in the way. We are afraid of *Temporal* Fire, and the *Executioners* Hands; but what are these to the Claws of tormenting *Devils*, and the *Everlasting* Fire of Hell? The Counsel of Saint *Ambrose* to a lapsed Virgin fits well in this place.

Ambr. cap. 8. ad Virg. lapsa.

True Repentance, saith he, ought not to be in word only, but in deed; and this is true Repentance indeed, if thou settest before thine Eyes from what Glory thou art fallen; and considerest with thy self out of what Book thy Name is blotted; and believest that now thou art near unto utter darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth without end. And when thou art certainly perswaded that these things are true, as indeed they are, seeing that the Soul that sinneth is in danger of Hell-fire, and there is no means after Baptism left to escape, but only Repentance;

pentance; be content to suffer any labour, to undergo any affliction, to be freed from *Eternal* punishment. The diseases of the Body move the sick man to purge the Body: Let the diseases of our Souls move us also to take the purgation of repentance: let the desire of our Salvation move us: let the fear of *Eternal* death and *Eternal* torments move us, let the hope of attaining *Eternal* life and *Eternal* glory move us. Let us embrace that which purgeth the Soul, and let us eschew that which polluteth it. And nothing defiles the Soul more than a filthy Body. Faithful is this counsel of Saint *Ambroſe*, and worthy of us to be embraced.

O Christ Jesus, grant unto us that we may so possess things transitory and *Temporal*, that finally we lose not the things which are *Eternal*: and give us grace to walk in their steps, and to follow their good example, of whom Saint *Augustine* speaketh; Many there are, saith he, that willingly come under the yoke, and of proud and haughty men become humble and lowly, desiring to be what before they despised, and hating to be what before they were; passing by, like strangers, things present, and making haste with greediness after things to come. They pant in their running towards their *Eternal* Country,

preferring Abſtinence before Fulneſs, Watching before ſleep, and Poverty before Riches, accounting labour in the conqueſt of vices to be but pleaſure, loving their enemies, paſſing by injuries; and all for the hope of an *Eternal* reward. And who then would not ſuffer any extremity and labour, to purchaſe unto themſelves an *Eternal* reward?

THE

I have considered the dayes of old the yeares of antient times. Psa: 76.5

Thy arrows pass by me the voice of thy Thunder is round about me the arrows of present punishments fly over my head, the voice of that horrible thunder, go ye curs'd into Eternall fire is like a wheel that will alwaies turne.

THE FOURTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

How holy David *meditated upon* Eternity, *and how we ſhould imitate him.*

THat God ſhould puniſh the *Apoſtate Angels* and Men condemned at the laſt day, with *Eternal* puniſhments, this hath ſeemed ſo ſtrange to ſome, and ſo incredible, that *Origen* himſelf (a man otherwiſe of an admirable wit and excellent learning, very well skilled in Scripture, (hath been ſo bold as to teach, That the Devils and the Damned after a certain time, when they ſhall be ſufficiently purged by the fire from their ſins, ſhall ar length be reſtored to grace. But St. *Auguſtine* and others convince him and condemn him of this his error. Yet notwithſtanding this error hath found in the world many favourers.

Lib. 21. *De civitate Dei, cap.* 23. *&c.*

favourers. Certain Hereticks called the *Aniti*, have disseminated and scattered it throughout *Spain*, by divers their interpretations. Some thought that all the damned, others that Christians only, others that Catholicks only, others that those only that had been more liberal than others in giving of Alms, should be delivered at length out of Hell. Though St. *Augustine* hath not refuted these their errors, yet the holy writ hath done it plainly and openly. Matth. 25. 41. *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire:* And again, ver. 46. *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life Eternal.* Here no Glosses or Interpretations will serve their turn to defend their errours. Wherefore the Divine *Psalmist* King *David*, though he delighted much in the consideration of both times, that which was past, and that which was to come. *Mine eyes,* (saith he) *prevent the night-watches,* Psal. 119. 148, And again in another place, *Thou holdest mine eyes waking, I am so troubled that I cannot speak.* Psal. 77. 4. What was it, Blessed Prophet, that thus broke thy sleep? What business hadst thou to do so early, before day-light? What caused thee so to keep silence, and to be troubled in mind? Hear what he saith, *I have considered the*

days

days of old, and the years of ancient times, and the years of Eternity I have had in my mind, Pſal. 77. 5. Lo, this was the thing that broke his ſleep, when he compared the years that were paſt with the years that were to come, and with *Eternity*. Neither did he thus in the day only, but *I call to remembrance*, ſaith he, *my ſong in the night: I commune with my own heart, and my ſpirit made diligent ſearch*, ver. 6. And what moved him to this nightly exerciſe? *Will the Lord caſt off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever?* See how he fears and trembles at the very conſideration of *Eternity*, how he is afraid of God's Judgments, leſt God ſhould puniſh them with *Eternal* puniſhment. And what is the end and effect of this Meditation? *And I ſaid, this is mine infirmity: But I will remember*, &c. or, *Now I will begin*. So in an inſtant, at the very ſame minute he became better than he was, and delayed not, neither did he defer his repentance, and put it off till worſe years; But, ſaith he, *Now I will begin*, now I will live a more godly life than I have done. He ſaith not, After ſuch an hour, or after ſuch a day; but, *Now even Now*. I will, ſome men ſay, If I were as *David* was: If I could meditate of *Eternity* as bleſſed *David* did, it may

may be then I would readily and with alacrity say with *David*, *Now I will begin*: But I am so entangled with daily cares, so hindred with worldly business, so distracted into divers parts one way or other, that I cannot. I live amongst men; I see and hear much evil; I have no time or leisure once to have so good a thought in mind as the thought of *Eternity*. When we meet together in company to make merry amidst our sports, and amongst our cups, we never confer about such grave points: our minds wander up and down about many things, and cannot then fix themselves upon the consideration of *Eternity*. At our feast and merry meetings, we take our cups, and please our selves in making jests: Thoughts of *Eternity* are too severe, too sad and melancholick to be entertained by us; we banish such out of our company. We enquire what news out of *Italy*, or *France*, or *Spain*. That which you tell us of so often concerning Heaven and Hell, is now old, and grown stale. We know it well enough already, what need you repeat it so often, till we loath it? So by this means there is no place or time left once to think upon *Eternity*. O Christian Brother, it is true indeed which thou sayest, I cannot deny it. But I could wish thou wouldst be as

ready

ready and forward to amend thy fault, as to confeſs it. It is too clear and manifeſt, we ſee it with our Eyes, that there is little or no care in the World of *Eternity*, although one thing or other every day ſtill puts us in mind of it.

The Book of the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of *Rome* at the Conſecration of their Biſhops, doth appoint theſe words to be recited, *Annos Æternos in mente habe*, *Keep* ſtill *in mind the Years of Eternity*; or *Think upon Eternity.* For when the Pope new Elect, in a ſolemn manner is carried along to St. *Peter's Church*, there goes one before him, having in his Hand burning Flax, and ſhaking it, he repeateth thrice theſe words, *Pater Sancte, ſic tranſit Gloria Mundi, Holy Father, ſo the Glory of the World paſſeth away.* It were a devout and godly practice, if we did every day at the beginning and end of all our Actions, ſay unto our ſelves theſe words, *Annos Æternos in mente habe*, *Think upon Eternity.* But eſpecially when we are tempted unto any Sin, when the Devil ſuggeſts and puts into our Minds ill thoughts, and when our Conſcience is in danger of being wounded, O then *Think upon Eternity.*

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Divers Admonitions to think upon Eternity.

PHilip King of *Macedon* appointed a certain Noble Young Man to salute him thrice every Morning after this manner, *Philippus, homo es*; *Remember*, Philip, *Thou art but a Man*; that being put daily in mind of his Mortality, he might carry himself towards mortal Men like a mortal Man. Much more ought every good Christian Man, and true Member of the Catholick Church, to be a Monitor unto himself, and with due consideration, thrice at the least every day, say to himself, *Eternity, Eternity, Eternity!* Why so? *Set thine House in order* (saith the Prophet to King *Hezekias*;) *For thou shalt die and not live.* There will come an Evening for certain, after which thou shalt see no Morning; or there will come a Morning, after which thou shalt see no Evening. Have an especial care therefore in all thy Actions, that thou woundest not thy Conscience; and trust not too far to those things that perish, for fear lest thou thy self together with them dost likewise perish, and finally lose the things that are *Eternal.*

It is a custom in *Germany*, and not to be disliked, in the evening when a Candle is

is first lighted, or brought into a room, to say, *Deus det nobis lucem Æternum*, God grant unto us light Eternal. We shall do well to imitate the *Germans* in this custom: or rather it is already in use and hath been long ago in many parts of this Kingdom, to say, *God grant us the light of Heaven.* It is very good daily to put us in mind of *Eternity.*

There is likewise a kind of *Eternity* in slavery aud imprisonment, but infamous and horrible. It is a cruel punishment and worse than death it self in some mens judgment, to be condemned to perpetual imprisonment, or to be a perpetual Gally-slave.

Those which are oppressed with sickness or other sorrows, do likewise imagine with themselves, that even in their sufferings there is a kind of *Eternity.* Whence it comes to pass that we often hear them utter such distemper'd speeches as these, *Will this last always! Shall I still without end be nailed fast to my bed? shall I suffer these pains and sorrows perpetually? shall I always be thus vexed and tormented?* Alack! these *Eternities* are but short, and soon come to an end. But it it be so grievous to flesh and blood to endure slavery or imprisonment here on earth, though but for a moment (for our life is no longer, according to *David's*

vid's measure, but a span, which is very short) what care and diligence, and what circumspection ought we to use, that we be not cast into the prison of hell, and into the fathomless pit, where there is slavery and imprisonment, pain and torment, to be endured throughout all ages, beyond all times, even to all *Eternity*.

CHAP. II.

That Eternity transcends all numbers of Arithmetick.

THere is a very common and well known Arithmetick, which Children are taught when they first go to School; and this is it. Suppose there was a Mountain of very fine Sand as big as the whole Earth, or rather much bigger: then suppose that every year an Angel should take from this Mountain one, and but one grain of Sand; how many thousand, and thousand, and again I say thousand, yea how many hundred thousand and yet more, how many thousand millions of years must there needs pass, before it can be perceived that the mountain is grown less, or any whit diminished? Let a man that is skilful in Arithmetick sit down, and begin to cast, how many years must pass before the moun-

Mountain, or half the Mountain be removed by the Angel. Certainly we cannot conceive that ever he ſhall be able to caſt up the total number of the Sand. But herein are we miſtaken: for although we cannot conceive it poſſible to be done, yet it may be done. But *Eternity* exceeds this number of Years beyond all compariſon, it is moſt certain: for *between a thing finite and a thing infinite there is no compariſon, no proportion.* *Eternity* hath no limits, no terms, no bounds, none at all. But ſuppoſe the damned ſhould burn in Hell no longer than till the Mountain, by grain after grain, year after year, ſhould by the Angel be quite removed; yet what an incomprehenſible number of Years muſt firſt paſs, before they can expect to ſee the day of deliverance! But (alas) there is no ſuch day to be expected; their Torments ſhall have no end: After that incomprehenſible number of Years, it ſhall be truly ſaid, Now beginneth their *Eternity*; their *Eternity* is not in any part expired; they are as far from the end of their Torments as they were at the beginning. After a thouſand Years, yea after a hundred thouſand Years, there ſhall not be an end, or middle, or beginning of *Eternity*: for the meaſure of *Eternity* is *Always.* The ſame Art of Arithmetick about the buſineſs of *Eternity*,

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a late Divine teacheth, in words somewhat different, but in meaning all one with the former. I therefore add it, because a Man can never sufficiently think or speak of it. Consider, saith he, what is the length of *Eternity*. How long shall God and his Saints reign? How long shall the damned burn in Hell? *For ever*. How long is that? Imagine an hundred thousand years: Alas! That is nothing in respect of *Eternity*. Imagine ten hundred thousand Years, yea so many Ages; yet that is nothing, *Eternity* is still as long as it was. Imagine a thousand Millions of Years: And yet that is nothing. *Eternity* is not a whit shortned. Imagine yet more a 1000000000000000000000000 0000; thousand-thousand; thousand-thousand; thousand-thousand; thousand-thousand Millions of Years. Imagine, I say, the damned should burn in Hell so many Years, and yet thou hast not found the very beginning of *Eternity*. Imagine once more so many Millions of Millions of Years as there are drops in the Sea, and yet thou art not come to the beginning of *Eternity*. Such for continuance in the *Eternity* of Joy into which the blessed shall enter, and the *Eternity* of torments which the damned shall suffer. O Jesus spare us, spare us O Jesus, O Jesus, save us, Have mercy upon us, O good Jesus, and suffer

Cornelius à Lapide in c. 15. Exod. ver. 8.

ſuffer us not to be plunged headlong into the bottomleſs Pit, to be tormented with the damned for all *Eternity*.

But yet if God would but ſay unto the damned, let the Earth be covered with moſt fine Sand, and let the World be filled therewith, and let it be heaped up ſo high as Heaven, and then let an Angel come once in every thouſand Years, and take one grain of Sand out of this heap; when after ſo many thouſand Years as there be grains of Sand, the Angel ſhall have removed the whole heap, then will I deliver you out of Hell: O how would the Damned exult and rejoyce, and not think themſelves damned! But (alas) after ſo many thouſand of Years there remain yet more, and more, and infinite more to all *Eternity*, even for ever and ever. This is that heavy weight that ſo preſſeth the Damned. Let every one therefore that ſinneth, conſider with himſelf, and again, I ſay, let him conſider, that unleſs he repent, he ſhall be preſſed and groan under this heavy weight of *Eternity*.

Gulielmus Peraldus, Biſhop of *Lions*, a very religious and learned Man, hath another manner of reckoning, meditating upon the innumerable number of Years throughout which the Damned ſhall be tormented. If the Damned, ſaith he, ſhould every day diſtill from their Eyes but one ſmall Tear, and

and those Tears should be added together day after day, they would at length far exceed the drops of the Ocean: for they have their number and measure; and it is easie with God to say, So many are the Drops of the Ocean and no more; but the Tears of the Damned exceed all number and measure. Alas! Alas! How little do we think upon these things! How freely and wilfully do we sin, and make our selves guilty of *Eternal* Punishment, and that oftentimes for a very little, short and filthy pleasure.

Yet there remains one way more, of casting up this numberless number of years: Suppose there were a Schedule of Parchment a span broad, but so long that it would begirt and incircle the whole Globe of the Earth: and suppose it were written all over very close with figures of 9, from one end to another; who so skilful an Arithmetician, that can tell the number thereof? What Mountain so great, that consisteth of so many grains of dust or sand? What Ocean so vast, that containeth within it so many drops of water? And yet this is nothing to *Eternity:* It stretcheth it self further than so; it knows no bounds; it is extended beyond all measure. But how far is it extended? It is extended infinitely and without end. If thy heart (O Christian

ſtian Man) be not turned into a ſtone, it cannot but melt at the conſideration of theſe things, and the very thought of the bottomleſs pit and *Eternal* puniſhment will make thee fear and tremble. If there be any ſenſe in thee, here it will ſhew it ſelf. But as I ſaid before, too few think upon theſe things; and too many live ſo ſecure of their ſalvation, as if there were no Heaven, no God, no Hell, nor *Eternity*. Every day they heap up ſin upon ſin, as if they laboured and ſtudied to make their laſt day to exceed the former, for the meaſure and number of their ſins: and ſo they paſs unto *Eternity* ſporting and playing, as if they went to priſon but a few weeks or days. Such men as theſe ſaith St. *Gregory*, when they ſhould be mourning for their ſins, they are dancing for their pleaſure; and when they ſhould be ſeriouſly meditating upon death, they run laughing unto execution. This is blindneſs indeed, this is oblivious madneſs. For this ſhort life which is but the ſhadow of *Eternity*, we labour beyond all meaſure; but for the life which is *Eternal*, and moſt happy, we ſcarce take any pains at all: And yet the not obtaining of this life, is the incurring of *Eternal* death; which as it is a torment more grievous than all the torments of this life, ſo in this it is moſt grievous, that there is no

reſt

reſt or mitigation of pain, no not for one ſhort hour in the infinite ſpace of all *Eternity*.

CHAP. III.

What effect and fruit the conſideration of Eternity bringeth forth.

AND this is it that hath made ſo many good Chriſtians, and ſo many Holy *Martyrs* ſo prompt and ready to ſuffer any torments, and any kind of death, that even in their greateſt pains, when they lay wallowing in their own blood, they were moſt ſtout and couragious, and with a conſtant look and cheerful countenance inſulted over their Tormentors. *They had the years of Eternity in mind.* This is it that hath made the world ſeem diſtaſteful and unpleaſant unto many, inſomuch that they have taken their leave of all pleaſures, and embraced and entertained a ſevere and ſtrict courſe of life, giving themſelves wholly to reading, meditation and prayer, and ſuch holy duties, minding heaven, and heavenly things. *They had the years of Eternity in mind.* The thought of *Eternity* will make all things in this life ſeem eaſie and pleaſant, though to fleſh and blood they ſeem moſt grievous and unpleaſant.

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It makes all labours seem light and very short. Prayer, Study, Watching, and such like holy Duties, it commends unto us, and makes them seem amiable. It seasons and sweetens Hunger and Thirst. It mitigates the sense of pinching Poverty. It makes all manner of Crosses in this Life not only tolerable, but also grateful and comfortable. Whosoever hath the Years of *Eternity* in mind, and imprints them within, deeper and deeper by daily Meditation, shunneth no Labour, neither is daunted with any Losses. Offer him a Kingdom, offer him all the Delights and Pleasures in the World; and he will not change his poor estate and condition for them. Such a Man as this is never complaining; he endures all things; he submits himself to all. For thus he thinks with himself, what a small thing is this or that, that or this, and of how short continuance! I will therefore endure it patiently; it will not last always. It is but for an hour, and that a very short one, that mine Enemies here oppress me. Well, go to ye detractors, bite me still, if ye will, ye envious; I will not run from you. This is your hour and the power of darkness: But I expect the day of the Lord, and the day of *Eternity*; and why should I afflict and torment my self with sorrow and lamentation? All this Life

is but a Death of one hour: The Victory is not difficult; but the Triumph is *Eternal*. Why should I be afraid of the raging waves of this troublesome World? I have sight of the Haven already. Now it rains and thunders upon the heads of the good and godly; but the storm will shortly blow over. But upon his Enemies God shall alwayes rain Fire and Brimstone, Storm and Tempest: This shall be their portion to drink, Dan. 12. 2. *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth* (so propheseth *Daniel*) *shall awake: some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* In the Old Law God commanded *Moses*, saying, *Numb.* 10. 2. *Make thee two trumpets of silver, of an whole piece shalt thou make them*, v. 4. *If they blow but with one trumpet, then the Princes, which are the heads of the thousands of Israel shall gather themselves unto thee. When ye blow an alarm, then the Camp shall go forwards.* Unto these two Trumpets we may compare these two words, NOW and ALWAYS. This is the law of the World, NOW let us be merry; *now* let us rejoyce; *now* let us enjoy our Goods, while we have them: Come, let us *now* crown our selves with Roses, before they be withered; *now* let us leave in every place the signs and footsteps of our Joy. They that attend only to the sound of this Trumpet, they that have Ears to

to hear nothing but this NOW, they live for the moſt part ſo, as if there were no ALWAYS for to follow. Therefore they do not remove the camp; amidſt their pleaſures they willfully forget that they are here but Pilgrims and ſtrangers: whither ſoever the wanton fleſh inviteth them they go with greedineſs: they are buſied altogether in heaping up riches and following pleaſures: and the ſound of this NOW doth ſo obtund and dull their eares, that they are deaf to all good counſels and precepts: and they will not ſo much as lend an ear to that ALWAYS which ſhall follow. But them which open their ears to hear, and their hearts to underſtand, when the Church ſoundeth both trumpets, (as it often doth) and thereupon ſeriouſly conſider with themſelves, and compare together this ſhort NOW with that infinite and everlaſting ALWAYS, they will uſe no delay, but preſently remove the Camp: they live here as Pilgrims and ſtrangers: they have their loyns girt; they remember that they are in a Journey; they ſend their riches and pleaſures before them into their Country which is above; they chuſe rather to enjoy them ALWAYS in Heaven, than NOW for a ſhort time upon earth. Certain it is, whoſoever heareth attentively, and mindeth ſeriouſly the Alarm of theſe

Trumpets, and thereupon compareth together things present with things future, and things transitory with things *Eternal*, he will presently make himself ready to depart, he will prepare himself a place of burial, he will lay out his winding-sheet, he will send for his bier, and furnish himself with all things necessary for his journey, remembring still in every place, that he is passing on the way to *Eternity*, and conferring with himself every day after this manner? How shall I be able to give an an account unto God for all my thoughts, words and deeds? and, When shall I give up my account? and what sentence will he pass upon me? NOW therefore will I die unto my self, that I may ALWAYS live unto my self and unto God. Well is it with that man, which timely and daily thus thinketh upon *Eternity*. Whatsoever we do, we are passing on our way, and we do not know how short it is, unto the gate which leadeth unto *Eternity*. At the last hour of our life, death shall bring us unto this gate, and compel us to enter. Let us therefore so live, as if we were always expecting death, that if it should please God at any time to visit us with sickness, the fore-runner of death, we may entertain it cheerfully, and bear it patiently, lifting up our eyes unto Christ hanging upon the

Cross,

Croſs, the true and perfect pattern of Patience: and when the time of our diſſolution draweth near, praying thus; Lord Jeſu ſtand by me and comfort me; Lord Jeſu be preſent with thy ſervant that putteth his truſt in thee; Lord Jeſu make me partaker of thy victory, Lord Jeſu receive my ſpirit, and lead me through the darkſome valley and ſhadow of death, lead me and forſake me not until thou haſt brought my ſoul into the land of the living, O thou moſt potent conqueror of death, O thou which art my light, life, and ſalvation.

To him be glory both now and for ever Amen. 2. Pet. 3. 18.

Because man shall go to his Eternall habitation. Eccles:
Alas! how unlike are the houses of Eternity one of them we must inhabit: we must either for ever rejoyce in heaven or for ever burne in hell.

THE FIFTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

How others, even wicked Men themselves, have meditated upon Eternity.

THE old History of the Fathers telleth us of a Religious Man, that reading upon the ninetieth Psalm, came at length, having not thought of it, to these words, *For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, when it is past*, and here stuck: For he could not conceive a Reason, why a thousand years and one day should be compared together. Whereupon they say there was a little Bird sent by God, which so ravisht the Man with her sweet singing, that though he heard her sing a very great while together, yet he thought the time very short, scarce a short hour long. *The wind bloweth where it listeth*, John 3. 8. Not good Men only have with holy *David* meditated upon *E-*

ternity, but even wicked Men also, and those oftentimes against their will.

Benedictus Rhenanus reports of a vain and ungodly fellow, a very Epicure and mere Worldling, which never used to fast or watch; one that could not endure the want of any thing, but especially sleep: Upon a certain night, it seemeth, this fellow could not sleep as he was wont, being much troubled with unusual Dreams; so he turneth himself upon his Bed from one side to another, and could not by any means get any rest; then he wished it were day. But here the wind of the Lord began to blow, though it were in a strange Land; for good Thoughts were very rare in this Man. Being weary with watching, and finding no ease or rest at all, thus he began to think with himself; Would any be hired upon any condition to lye thus, two or three Years together in darkness, without the Company of Friends, though his Sickness were not very grievous? Would he be content to want his Sports and Plays so long? Would he be content to be bound to his Bed, though it were a Feather-bed, or a Bed of Down, and never stir abroad to see any sights, or shews, or make merry with his Friends? I think no Man would. And shall alone amongst all Men enjoy rest and pleasure by an especial priviledge, and

and have no end of grief and ſorrow? Surely no. Will I, nill I, needs I muſt ſometime or other lye down upon the bed of ſickneſs, unleſs I be ſuddenly taken away by death, which God forbid. (*This was a good wind, theſe were good cogitations.*) But what bed ſhall I have next, when death ſhall thruſt me out of this? My body muſt rot under earth: For this is the condition of all men after death. But what ſhall become of my Soul in another World? Surely all men do not go to the ſame place after death. Do not ſome go one way, and ſome another? Is there not an Hell as well as an Heaven? Wo and alas! What kind of bed ſhall the damned find in Hell? How many years ſhall they lie there? In what year after their firſt entrance ſhall the flames ceaſe and be put out? Aſſuredly Chriſt doth not only in word threaten to caſt the wicked into everlaſting fire, but will alſo caſt them indeed. This thing is certain and very manifeſt. Therefore the damned ſhall burn in Hell for ever. Therefore a thouſand, and a thouſand, and again I ſay a thouſand years will not ſuffice to purge away the ſins of this ſhort life. Therefore they ſhall never ſee the Sun any more, nor Heaven nor God, being moſt miſerable *Eternally* and without end. With ſuch

thoughts as these this man became so vigilant and watchful, and proceeded so far, that night nor day he could not be at rest, but *Eternity* did still run in his mind. Fain indeed he would have shaken off the thoughts thereof, as gnawing Worms; but he could not. Therefore he followed sports and pastimes, went to merry meetings, sought out companions like himself, and sate oftentimes so long at his cups, that he laid his Conscience asleep, and so seemed to take some rest: but when he came again unto himself, his Conscience being awakened did presently accuse him, and suggest unto him afresh sorrowful thoughts of *Eternity*. Thus finding no rest, he resolved at length to amend his manners, and to betake himself to a better course of life. And thus he began to reason with himself, Miserable man that I am, what do I here? I so enjoy the world, that indeed I enjoy it not; I suffer many things I would not; I want many things which fain I would have: I serve like a slave, but who will pay me my wages! I see well enough how the world rewardeth those that love it, and do all their lives nothing else but serve it. But suppose I had the fruition of all the delights and pleasures in the World that my heart could wish: what certainty can

I have how long they ſhall laſt? I am not certain whether I ſhall live till to morrow or no: Daily Funerals ſufficiently prove this. Oh *Eternity*, if thou wert not! Oh *Eternity*, if thy place be not in Heaven, though it be on a ſoft Down-bed; thou canſt not but be bitter and unpleaſant. It is true indeed, it is a hard matter to withdraw our ſelves away from thoſe things whereunto we are accuſtomed, whether it be feaſting, or drinking, or company keeping, or ſuch like: But whilſt we delay and defer the time, Death may prevent us, and take us away from all theſe. Why then doſt thou delay? Why doſt thou not impoſe an honeſt and happy neceſſity upon thy ſelf? Why doſt thou not reſolve thus preſently with thy ſelf? Well, I will be another Man than I have been, if it pleaſe God I live. This Life laſteth not long; but *Eternity* endureth for ever. I muſt walk now in a new way; I am reſolved upon it; and *Now* I begin. Where art thou bleſſed *Eternity*? I am ſeeking for thee, I am travelling towards thee.

To conclude, he did as he ſaid, he took his leave of the World; he changed the courſe of his Life; and ſo lived and died an honeſt and godly Man.

Oh *Eternity*, how few are they that think;

think thus seriously upon thee? But certainly there are very few, scarce any that weigh and consider well with themselves what they are, and so continue and persist in that Consideration. We seek earnestly after all other things, only *Eternity* seemeth vile unto us, and not worth the looking after. Our thoughts run after Riches, and yet the possession of them is very uncertain; we know not how soon they shall forsake us, or we them. We are ambitious after Honours; and yet they are slippery, and soon slide away from us. We are in love with Pleasures; and yet they have sorrow and bitterness in their latter end. We desire rest; but it is of no long continuance. We knit the knot of Friendship with others; but it is such as Death shall quickly dissolve. We are never well but when we are conversing with others; but our Conversation is never in Heaven, where it should be. We seek for abundance; but it is there where it will soon fail. But surely if we did more often and seriously think upon *Eternity*, we should not have such a fervent desire after things of so short a continuance. I call Saint *Bernard* to witness, who saith thus, *He that longeth after things Eternal, cannot but loath things transitory.*

There are that have often in their mouths

mouths I know not what *Eternity*, that will promiſe and ſwear, and make good reſolutions of amendment, and ſay thus; As long as I live, I will beware of ſuch a place, or ſuch a place, where I have formerly been tempted to ſin: I will never come near ſuch a Man, or ſuch a Woman, or ſuch a one that was my Companion in evil, I will never come near him as long as I live. As long as I live, I will never go to ſuch and ſuch Meetings, where there uſeth to be Gluttony and Drunkenneſs, Dancing, Chambering and Wantonneſs, and ſuch like. It ſhall ſuffice me that I have been there once, and again, and perhaps oftner; that I have done as the Company did, that I have ſinned with ſuch and ſuch. Theſe are good Reſolutions: In this I commend thee, O Man: Becauſe Sin is to be feared, thou doſt well in purpoſing to avoid the occaſion of ſinning: and I could wiſh thou wert as Religious in obſerving what thou haſt promiſed, as thou art ready to promiſe. But (alas!) after a day or two, yea an hour or two, too forgetful of thy Promiſe and good Reſolution, thou doſt again the very ſame thing which lately thou didſt deteſt, abhor and forſwear. Therefore before thou makeſt a Vow or Promiſe unto God, it is good to uſe due conſideration and foreſight; and when

when thou hast made a vow or promise unto God, it is necessary to use after care and Christian fortitude in performance. Thou must promise nothing rashly and unadvisedly unto God: but what thou hast promised thou must religiously and constantly keep and observe. How severe God is in punishing such as break their Vows and Promises, we are sufficiently taught by the woful experience and lamentable example of others.

CHAP. I.

The comparison of Man's labour and the Spider's one with another.

THere is another *Eternity*, and that the worst of all, which those Men promise to themselves, which will needs erect unto themselves an Heaven out of Heaven, and be blessed before they be dead. *Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men*, saith the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell we are at agreement*, Isaiah 28. 14, 15. O ye mad men! How vain, and none at all, is this your *Eternity!* There is nothing permanent and perpetual in this Prison. Elegantly doth the Kingly Prophet declare this;

this; Pſal. 90. 9. *We ſpend our years,* ſaith he, *as a tale that is told, &c. We ſpend our years in muſing, like the Spider,* (for ſo ſome read it.) He could not have declared it better, and in fewer words. For what are all our years but a continual muſing, and weariſome exerciſe? All the time of our life is conſumed and waſted away with vain labours, many ſorrows, ſundry fears, often ſuſpicious, and innumerable troubles: Even as the Spider ſpendeth her ſelf in the weaving of her web. Our labours are continual, linked one unto another; our ſighs and groans continual, partly in the purſuing of our profits and pleaſures, and partly in the removing and eſchewing thoſe things which we count evil. We do many things, we undertake many labours, troubleſome and grievous to be born, and mean-while (alas! ſuch is our folly) we perceive not that we do but weave the Spiders web, taking a great deal of pains, with little ſucceſs, to no end or purpoſe, *We ſpend our years in muſing like the Spider.* It is a great deal of pains and care that the Spider taketh in weaving of her web, ſhe runneth much and often up and down, ſhe fetcheth a compaſs this way and that way, and returneth often to the ſame point, ſhe ſpendeth her ſelf in a multitude of

of fine-spun threads, to make her self a round Cabinet; she exenterareth her self, and worketh out her own Bowels, to make an artificial and curious piece of work, which when it is made, is apt to be blown away with every puff of wind; she hangeth up aloft, she fastneth it to the roof of the house, she strengthneth it with many a thread, weeling often round about, not sparing her own Bowels, but spending them willingly upon her work. And when she hath done all this, spun her fine threads, weaved them one within another, wrought her self a fine Canopy, hanged it aloft, and thinketh all is sure; on a sudden in the twinkling of an eye, with a light sweep of a beesome all falleth to the ground, and so her labour perisheth. But here is not all: Poor Spider! she is either killed in her own web, or else she is taken in her own snare, haled to death and troden under foot. Thus the silly *Animal* may be truly said, either to weave her own winding-sheet, or to make a snare to hang her self. Just so do many men, like the Spider, waste and consume themselves to get preferment, to enjoy pleasures, to gather riches, to keep them, and to increase them. In such projects they spend all their wit, and oftentimes the healths of their bodies, running up and down, labouring

bouring and ſweating, carking and caring; wearying themſelves, and weakening their Bodies, even as the Spider doth by ſpinning out of her own Bowels. And when they have done all this, they have but weaved the Spiders Web to catch Flies. Yea, oftentimes they are caught in their own nets, they are inſtruments of their own miſchief. The days of mirth which they promiſe to themſelves, prove oftentimes the days of mourning: That which they call their Palace, becometh their burying-place. So *we ſpend our years in muſing like the Spider*: I ſay, *in muſing*, for the moſt part: For we often purpoſe to do many things, and do them not. And what we do moſt an end were better undone. Thoſe things which we purſue with ſuch greedineſs, for the moſt part flie from us; and thoſe things which we contend for with ſuch earneſtneſs, we ſeldom attain to: But ſuppoſe we did (Alas!) they have no perpetuity. So *the covenant with death ſhall be diſannulled, and the agreement with hell ſhall not ſtand*, Iſa. 28. 18. We all conſume away and die: and which is worſt of all, we blindly ruſh headlong into *Eternity*, from whence there is no return.

Guerricus hearing theſe words read in the Church out of the Book of *Geneſis*, Gen.

Gen. 5. 5. *And all the days that Adam lived, were nine hundred and thirty years: And he dyed.* 8. *And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: And he died.* 11. *And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: And he died. And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: And he died, &c.* Hearing, I say, these words read, the very conceit of Death wrought so strongly upon him, and made so deep an impression in his mind, that he retired himself from the World, and gave himself wholly to his Devotions, that so he might die the Death of the Godly, and arrive more safely at the Haven of *Eternal* Felicity, which is no where to be found in this World.

CHAP. II.

What is the best Question in the World?

SAint *Matthew* telleth us of a young Man that came unto Christ, and propounded a question unto him, *Mat.* 19. 16. And Saint *Mark* describeth the manner of his coming to our Saviour, and his good carriage: For, saith he, *There came one running and kneeling to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit*

inherit Eternal Life? Mark 10. 17. And our Saviour's answer was, *Thou knowest the Commandments: If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments*, Matth. 19. 17. *At Philippi a City of Macedonia, the keeper of the Prison came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas*, and moved this question unto them, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* This was a very good question; A better and more profitable could not be moved. But, O good God, where is this question now in the World? The World is full of other questions: but this is scarce any where to be heard. Most men do now a days betray themselves by their own questions, and bring to light, and so make others witnesses of their simplicity, or curiosity, or some such hidden disease of mind. He which maketh diligent search and enquiry where the best Wine is to be sold, doth sufficiently declare what he loves best, and where his chiefest care is. Another asketh such questions as a modest Man would blush to hear: And this man shews that his heart is full, and that out of the abundance thereof his mouth speaketh. All mens mouths in all places are full of questions, such as these are: But it is a rare thing to hear one Man ask another this question, Do you think this is the way to Heaven? It is a fault

fault common to every vicious Man, but more proper to the libidinous and luſtful, the luxurious and riotous Man, though he be plunged into the deep, and begins to ſink, and to be overwelmed, yet ſeldom or never to enter into a ſerious conſideration with himſelf, and with a ſincere mind ask himſelf this queſtion, Shall I ever think to obtain *Eternal* felicity by this courſe of life? Is this the way to Heaven? But of all men thoſe eſpecially leaſt think upon ſuch queſtions as theſe, thoſe I ſay, that live a ſoft life, fare deliciouſly, and wallow in pleaſures, that feel little or no ſorrow and affliction, or if they do at any time feel never ſo little, labour what they can to be ſenſeleſs of it. To ſuffer, they count the greateſt of all evils. If it goes well with them, they care not how it fares with others. If it be well with them for the preſent, they take no care what ſhall follow after. They never once think upon *Eternity*. This is their daily ditty, *The Heaven of Heavens is the Lords, but the earth he hath given to the ſons of Men.* They want neither ſtrength of Body or Mind, by which to eſcape the hands of men. But God hath long hands, he ſhall ſurely find them out, they muſt appear before him who is the Judge of all the World; they cannot eſcape his judgment; they ſhall ſurely

ſurely ſuffer *Eternal* puniſhments for their wickedneſs and their offences. But if God in his ſecret judgment caſteth away any man as a reprobate, and ſuffereth him to live after his own luſt and pleaſure, he giveth him his portion of proſperity and felicity in this life, he ſpareth him here, that he may puniſh him hereafter. And if at any time he doth any thing that is good, he preſently receiveth his reward. Of ſuch unhappy-happy Men the kingly prophet thus ſpeaketh, Pſal. 73. 5. *They are not in trouble as other Men; neither are they plagued like other Men.* Pſal. 106. 39. They go *a whoring with their own inventions.* And this is a moſt miſerabe eſtate and condition of life, if there be any. For who God hath predeſtinated to bring him into the way of *Eternal* happineſs, he ſpareth him not here in this life, but ſcourgeth him daily. I might bring infinite examples to prove this: I will name but one; but the like, I think, hath not been ſeen or heard of in many ages.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

How God punisheth here, that he may spare hereafter. A strange example, the like hath scarce at any time been heard of

IN the year of our Lord, One thousand one hundred eighty five, *Andronicus* Emperour of the East being overcome and taken prisoner by *Isaac Angelo*, had two heavy iron chains put about his neck, was laden with fetters and shackles, and was most barbarously and despitefully used, and at length in this manner was brought before the forenamed *Isaac*. Before whom complaining of his hard usage, he was delivered over to the multitude to be abused at their pleasure. They being set on fire with anger, thought it a fine thing to be revenged of their enemy: and thus they used him. They buffeted him, they bastinadoed him, they pulled him by the beard, they twicht his hair from his head, they dasht out his teeth, they dragged him in publick, they made him a laughing-stock, they suffered women to beat him with their fists. Then they cut off his right hand; and being thus maimed, they thrust him into the dungeon of thieves and robbers without either meat or drink or any other thing that was necessary, or any one to look

look after him. After a few days they put out one of his Eyes, and being thus ſhamefully mangled, having one Eye put out, and one Hand cut off, they put upon him a very ſorry ſhort Coat, ſhaved his Head, ſet him upon a ſcabbed Camel with his Face towards the Tail, put upon his Head a Crown of Garlick, made him hold in his Hand the Camels Tail inſtead of a Scepter, and ſo they carried him through the Market-place very leiſurely with great pomp and triumph. And here the moſt impudent, baſe and vile amongſt the People, like ſavages, after an inhumane ſort fell upon him, nothing at all conſidering that not paſt three days before he was no leſs than an Emperor, Crowned with a Royal Diadem, commended, worſhipped, honoured, yea and adored of all Men. Nothing at all regarding the Oath of Allegiance, they raged and were mad upon him, and their rage and madneſs fitted every Man with Inſtruments of Miſchief againſt him. Some ſtruck him on the Head with Clubs, others filled his Noſtrils with Dirt, others ſqueezed Spunges upon his Face, firſt ſoaked in the Excrements of Man and Beaſt, others run him into the Sides with Spits. Some threw Stones, others threw Dirt at him: Some called him mad Dog, others called him Fool and Blockhead. An impudent Woman running

running out of a Kitchin with a kettle of scalding water in her hand, poured it upon his head as he passed by. There was none which did not some mischief or other to him. At length they brought him to the Theatre to make him a laughing-stock, took him down from the Camel, and hanged him up by the heels between two pillars. Thus the poor Emperor having suffered a thousand Indignities, yet he bore them patiently, carrying himself like a Man, and a true Christian Champion. He was never heard all the while to lament, or cry out of his hard fortune: for it had been to no purpose. He was all the while casting up his account, which he was to make unto God, and begging pardon for his Sins. He was heard to say nothing but only this, and this he said often, *Domine miserere*, *Domine miserere*, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

Unhappy *Andronicus*, which wast compelled to suffer such things! But happy in this, that thou didst suffer them so patiently, as being the just reward of Sin.

When he was hanged up, one would have thought their Malice should have ceased; but they spared him not then, as long as he lived. For they rent his Coat from his Body; and tossed him up and down with their hands, tearing him in pieces

pieces with their nails. O more cruel than the reſt run his ſword through his belly, and guts, as he was hanging. Two others, to try whoſe ſword was ſharpeſt, thruſt him through the back, leaning upon their ſwords with both their hands. Here the moſt miſerable unhappy Emperour, which much ado lifted up his maimed hand to his mouth, to put out the blood, as ſome thought, from the freſh and bleeding wound, and ſo ended his life miſerably. After ſome few days he was taken down from the gibbit, and thrown under one of the arches of the Theater like a beaſt, till ſome that had more humanity in them than the reſt, removed him; but yet notwithſtanding he was not ſuffered to be buried. O *Andronicus!* O thou Emperour of the Eaſt! How much waſt thou bound unto God, whoſe will it was that for a few days thou ſhouldſt ſuffer ſuch things, that thou mighteſt not periſh for ever! Thou waſt miſerable for a ſhort time, that thou mighteſt not be miſerable for all *Eternity*. I make no doubt but thou hadſt the years of *Eternity* in mind, ſeeing that thou didſt ſuffer ſuch things ſo conſtantly & couragiouſly.

Nicetas Choniatas is mine Author, from whom I borrowed this lamentable Hiſtory; and he lived about the ſame time, when this happened.

Let us Christians keep always in mind the years of *Eternity*. So whatsoever adversity or affliction happeneth, we shall more easily bear it. Every thing is short, if we compare it with *Eternity*. *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and Eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. Hereupon St. *Augustine* crieth out, and prayeth so earnestly *Domine, hic ure, hic seca, modo in æternum parcus: Lord, sear me here, lance me here, so thou spare st me hereafter.* And *Fulgentius*, though a most holy man, drawing near unto his death, threescore and ten days before he died, was often heard to cry out, *Domine, da mihi modo patientiam, & postea indulgentiam; Lord, grant me patience here, and ease hereafter.* These were his words and prayers even to the last gasp. Certain it is, God spareth them least of all, whom he determineth to take unto himself to dwell with him throughout all *Eternity*.

THE

We have a building of God an house not made with hands Eternall in the heavens 2: Cor: 5. 1.

Let none wonder at my habitation I have here a most large palace, when I think upon the everlasting prisons of hell and the Eternall Mansions of heaven.

THE SIXTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

How the holy Scripture in many places teacheth us to meditate upon Eternity.

THE Kingly Prophet, ſpeaking of the Wicked, ſaith, That they *walk in every ſide*, or *in a circuit*, Pſal. 12. 8. This is their manner of Life: They go from Feaſt to Feaſt, from Delights to Delights, from Wickedneſs to Wickedneſs. This is their Circuit. And when they think they have almoſt finiſhed their Circuit of Wickedneſs, and gone over the round of their Luſt, they begin again, returning ſtill to their former courſe, till Death ſtealeth upon them before they be aware.

The Children of *Job* made this Law amongſt themſelves, to feaſt one another round, every one in his courſe. The good Man their Father obſerved and knew very well, that this their feaſting round, could

not be without Sin: And therefore he *sent, and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all*, Job 1. 5. As therefore the wicked delight and rejoyce in going the circuit of th ir pleasure; so God shall appoint them a *circuit* to go, but it shall be a *circuit* of Torments, and that perpetual and *Eternal*. Blessed *David* foresaw this likewise: For saith he, *Thine arrows went abroad: The voice of thy thunder was heard in the Heaven*, or, *round about*. Psal. 77. 17. 18. Famine, War, Pestilence, Sorrows, Diseases, Calamities, Death it self, and all Adversities whatsoever that happen before the first death, are the Arrows of the Lord; but they fly over; they have wings, and they quickly fly from one to another. But the voice of his Thunder, the voice of his Anger and Fury shall continually roar in the Prison of Hell, and like a Wheel run round without wearing, for all *Eternity*. This Wheel, as if it were filled with Gun-powder, when it hath once taken fire, shall burn for ever and ever. *A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest Hell*, Deut. 32. 22. There is also another *circuit*, and that likewise is *Eternal*; from unutterable Cold to intolerable Heat, and from Heat back again to Cold, Job 24. 19. *Drought and heat consume*

ſume the ſnow waters, (ſo ſaith *Job*) and *ſo doth the grave thoſe that have ſinned*. St. *Matthew* ſignifieth it more expreſly by the *gnaſhing of teeth*, *and the weeping* of eyes. *Matth.* 12. 13. That we may more fully ſet out this horrible and incomprehenſible wheel, order requireth that we ſhew how the Church agreeth with the Holy Scripture in this, as the holy Fathers agree with the Church. We have here divers good admonitions from all theſe, which if we attend unto, we cannot eaſily let *Eternity* ſlip out of our memory.

CHAP. I.

The Anſwers of the Holy Fathers and the Church about this.

OF all the holy Fathers which have lived in divers ages, we ſhould do well to harken unto five eſpecially *Auguſtine*, *Chryſoſtome*, *Gregory*, *Bernard*, *Laurentius*, *Juſtinianus*.

The firſt queſtion here (which yet may ſeem a vain and fooliſh one) is, Which is eaſier, and more tolerable, to ſuffer pain in the head, eyes or teeth; to be troubled with the ſtone; to be pained with the wind Cholick, or *Iliaca Paſſia*, or any other acute diſeaſe; neither to ſleep night

or day, but to be tormented continually without any respite for three days together. The question now is, I say, Which is easier, whether to suffer the pains now mentioned, or else to eat a piece of fish, which is made bitter by the breaking of the Gall. This may seem a very ridiculous and most idle question. For, how much better is it to eat such a whole fish, rather than suffer those so grievous torments though but one day! The bitterness of the fish will not endanger a Mans life, nor make him sick, but leave only a bitter taste in the mouth, which is unpleasing to it. It is truly answered. And yet how many thousands of men make choice rather of the former! For, how often doth the Preacher teach and exhort, cry out and speak plainly! Christian Brethren, consider well with your selves, and look about you? the *Eternal* salvation of your souls is in question: If you walk this way, you must assuredly look for *Eternal* torments: Christ hath shewed you another way both by his life and doctrine. Return therefore and repent, you have gone long enough astray. You may if you will have entrance into Heaven; If you be shut out it is your own fault, God is not wanting to those that are willing. It is true indeed, There is some bitterness in using abstinence

nence and Faſting, in confeſſing of Sins, in keeping the Body under, in ſetting a ſtrict watch over thy Senſes, in conquering ones ſelf, in living chaſtly and continently: This is no eaſie task: But, let it be what it will, we muſt ſuffer it. *Luke* 24. 26. *Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and ſo to enter into his glory?* Let not a little and ſhort labour terrifie us. It is but for a few Years, or it may be but a few days, that we are to do and ſuffer valiantly; but our joy and reſt ſhall be *Eternal.* He overcometh all, whoſoever overcometh and conquereth himſelf, containeth himſelf, and reſiſteth his evil and violent Paſſions, and all this for Chriſt, for Heaven, for bleſſed *Eternity.* Chriſt after his Reſurrection found his Diſciples eating Fiſh broiled upon the Coals: To teach them how great things they ſhould afterwards ſuffer; and that they were not to think of a ſoft and eaſie Life, but that they were to be ſtoned, whipped, crucified, have their Skin pulled over their Ears; that this was the way to a joyful Reſurrection, and to the participation and fellowſhip of *Eternity* with the bleſſed; that all other things were ſmall and of no worth in compariſon of Immortality, and that Bleſſedneſs, which yet Eye hath never ſeen. Theſe things are often ſpoken of, but they

are little regarded. This Fish bitter with the over flowing of the gall, that is Worldly Crosses and the Sufferings of this Life, is often set before us; but it goeth against our stomach, we cannot endure to taste of it. *Eternity* is a thing we often hear of, we often read of, it is continually preached unto us, and often repeated: but we either hear not, or believe not, or regard not; or if we do for a time, the Cares of the World soon put it out of our Minds, and we bury it in oblivion. But again, the Conscience often plays the Preacher, and recals to our mind these wholsome Lessons, is instant, dehorts, reproves; but prevails nothing. All is in vain. For many are so obstinate and perverse, that neither the Preacher nor their own Conscience can work upon them. But some are so impudent, that they will set themselves in opposition, and reply thus, *Let it go well with us here, and we care not; we neither know nor care what shall come hereafter; we are all for present profits and pleasures; no man returneth again from the dead; neither was it ever known that any one came back again out of Hell. Come therefore, let us eat, drink, and be merry, let us enjoy our goods and take our pleasure.* These are the worldlings Ditties: But let S. *Augustine* determine this question, *Melius est, modica amari-*

amaritudo in faucibus, quam Æternum tormentum in viſceribus. Better it is, ſaith he, *to ſuffer a little bitterneſs in the mouth, than Eternal torments in the inward parts.* It is far better to ſuffer for our offences here in this World than the World to come. Far better it is for threeſcore years and ten continually together here on earth, to be puniſhed with moſt grievous puniſhments, than to ſuffer the torments of Hell for one day, yea for one hour hereafter. But let us hear what another of the Fathers ſaith.

Saint *Chryſoſtome* propounds the ſecond queſtion after this manner; Suppoſe one night in an hundred years a man ſhould have a ſweet & pleaſant dream, and be after puniſhed an hundred years for it, would he think ſuch a dream were to be deſired? And yet, ſaith the Father, as a dream is to an hundred years, ſo is this preſent life to the life to come, yea rather it is much leſs: And as a drop is to the main Ocean, ſo are a thouſand years unto *Eternity.* And in another place. What is there, ſaith he, to be compared unto *Eternity?* What are a thouſand years in compariſon of infinite ages which are yet for to come? Are they not like unto the

Hom. 20. *ad Pop. Antioc.*

Hom. 28. *in Epiſt. ad Hebr.*

the least drop of a bucket compared to a bottomless Well? Look for no end of torments after this life, unless thou repentest before thou departest out of this life: for after death there is no place of repentance, no shedding of tears will profit thee, or do thee any good. Though a Man in Hell should gnaw his teeth, and blare out his scorched tongue, he shall not obtain so much as a drop of cold water. Grant then that a man should enjoy pleasures all his life long, what is that to infinite ages which are yet for to come? Here in this life all things good and bad have at length an end; but the punishments that shall be suffered hereafter shall have no end. Set on fire thy body here, and the Soul will soon depart: but after the resurrection, when the body shall be from thenceforth immortal and incorruptible, the Soul of the damned shall always burn, and not consume in Hell-fire. They shall rise again, incorruptible indeed: but how? Not to receive a Crown of incorruptible glory, but to suffer *Eternal* torments. But let us hear what another of the Fathers saith.

Saint *Gregory* maketh answer to this common question; Will not drunkenness sooner steal upon a Man in the Wine-cellar, standing by the hogshead, than in the Par-

Parlour ſitting at the Table? The ſpouſe of Chriſt triumphed in the words of *Solomon*, *he brought me to the Banquetting-houſe* (or ſome read it, *He brought me into his Wine cellar*) *and his banner over me was love*, or *he hath ſet his banner of love over me.* Upon which words St. *Gregory* diſcourſing ſaith thus, By the *Wine-cellar* what can we better or more fitly conceive, than the ſecret contemplation of *Eternity*? For truly whoſoever doth ſeriouſly conſider with himſelf upon *Eternity*, and lets this conſideration ſink deep into his mind, he may truly rejoyce, and triumph with the Spouſe, ſaying, *He hath ſet his banners of love over me*: For he will keep better order in his love, loving himſelf leſs, God more, and even his enemies alſo for God's ſake. But ſuch is the nature of this profound conſideration, that it will preſently make a man drunk. Make him drunk? How? With the drunkenneſs of the beſt deſires, ſuch as will lead him to amendment of life, carry him to his heavenly Country, and bring him at length to joys *Eternal*. It was caſt in the Apoſtles teeth, that they were drunk with wine? and ſo they were indeed; but it was with wine out of this Cellar. St. *Gregory* hath many excellent conſiderations and ſayings upon *Eternity*: amongſt others he hath this,

this, which is a very short one and a true one, *Momentum quod delectat, Æternum quod cruciat, That which delighteth is momentary, but that which tormenteth is Eternal.* Here I could wish with *Job*, Job 19. 23, 24. *O that these words were written! O that they were printed in a Book! That they were graven with a pen of Iron!* These words, I say, *that which delighteth is momentary, but that which tormenteth is Eternal.* The *Book* in which this should be written, is the *heart* of man; the *pen of iron* with which it should be written, is serious *meditation*; the *Ink* with which it should be written, is the *Blood* of *Christ*. And these words so imprinted and ingraven in the breast, are then especially to be called to mind, and to be often repeated, when pleasure fawneth, when lust provoketh, when luxury inviteth, when the flesh rebelleth, and the spirit faileth, when there is occasion of sin offered, and danger of falling into sin. But let us hear what another of the Fathers saith.

In the fourth place comes *St. Bernard*: He shall answer to the question here to be propounded. In the lives of men there is such difference, that almost now so many men so many judgments concerning afflictions. There are found some so grievously and continually afflicted, that they are ready

ready to fall down under the Croſs, as being too heavy for them to bear. One is oppreſſed with Poverty, another is afflicted with Sickneſs, another is overcharged with ſecret Debts, another is tormented with Cares, another is grieved and vexed with Injuries and Slanders; every Man thinketh that moſt grievous which in preſent he ſuffereth. And many times it cometh to paſs, that ſuch as are faint-hearted and impatient, wiſh for Death, run into the Water, and make haſte to the Halter, thinking thereby to find an end of all their Griefs and ſorrows, whereas indeed that ſuppoſed end becomes to them, but the beginning of their Sorrows, and ſuch Sorrows as never ſhall have end. But with the good and godly it is not ſo: They patiently endure all, ſubmitting themſelves in all things to God's good Will and Pleaſure. They neither deſire to die quickly, nor yet to live long. Is it God's will they ſhall die? They alſo are willing. Will he have them die quickly? They are willing to that alſo. Will he have them live yet longer? They are not againſt that. What God willeth, that they will: what he willeth not, neither will they. Beſide theſe two kinds of Men, there is a third, and that is the greateſt part of Men, that deſire to live long: And there is almoſt no Man ſo old,

but

but he hopes and desires to live yet another year. These Men are never heard to say, they have lived long enough. Death maketh too much hast with them, he cometh to them too soon, yea, and before his time. Here now the question may be moved; Who live? or who shall live longer? St. *Bernard* in his seventeenth Sermon upon the 91 Psalm, upon these words, *With long Life will I satisfie him*, breaketh forth into this admiration, What is so long as that which is *Eternal?* What is so long as that which shall have no end? Life *Eternal* is the good end which we are all to aim at, and this end is without end. And further he adds, That is the true day indeed after which there follows no night, where there is *Eternal* verity, and true *Eternity*, and therefore true and *Eternal* society. So then the question may be determined thus, That those only shall live a long Life truly so called, whosoever shall never die, but always live in Heaven; And again, That those shall die in a lingring Death (alas! too lingring a Death) whosoever shall alwayes die, but ever live in Hell: for they shall live only there to be tormented always. Let us hear but one more, and so conclude.

Laurentius Justinianus shall resolve the last question for us. There are, saith he, many

many things in this World which nature hath so appropriated and assigned to some one certain place, that they are not to be found in another place, unless it be in part. Of some flowers which grow in the new-found world we have only the seed: Of some living Creatures there are brought over unto us only the Skins. Now *Eternity* is a thing so proper to another World, that it is not to be found in this; only the seed thereof we may have even in this World. And what are the seeds of *Eternity?* They are saith *Laurentius*, *Contempt of a mans self, the gift of Charity, and the taste of Christ's works. To contemn others*, is a Tree that overspreadeth the whole World, whose Wood is Fewel for the Fire of Hell. *To contemn* himself is a very small seed, scarce known in the World: Christ brought it down from Heaven with him who *made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and became obedient*, not to the Stable only, or the Manger, but even to Mount *Calvary*, *unto death, even the death of the Cross*, unto the grave, yea even unto Hell, ver. 9. *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him* Behold, this little seed is grown up and spread in breadth, and is become the highest of all trees. The same Author, speaking of *Charity*, saith thus, The measure of our *glory* and *Eternal*

nal reward shall be according to the measure of our *Charity*, For, *To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little*, Luke 7. 47. He obtaineth less *grace*, whosoever hath less *Charity*: And where there is less *grace*, there also shall be less *glory*. So then it is most true, The more thou lovest God, the more thou heapest up unto thy self *Eternal* rewards. The whole Law is *love*, but it must be pure, chaste, and holy. I have done with the second, which is *Charity*. I come to the third, which is *The taste of Christs words*. It is a common and witty saying in the Rhetorick Schools, *He is to be thought a good proficient who can relish Tully's works*: We may say as much in the School of Christianity, *He hath made a good progress in Religion and Vertue, who can relish Christs works, who likes the taste of Christs doctrine and example*. But whosoever findeth no taste almost at all, no relish in the words and works of Christ; whosoever is not moved, affected, and delighteth with those things which belong unto the mind, and Christian piety to Heaven, and *Eternal* felicity; but on the contrary findeth much sweetness in eating, drinking, walking, laughing, jesting and playing: the same Man may say with sorrow enough, too truly, *How little seed of Eternity have I within me, O my God!* Or rather

rather, *I have none at all.* For when I descend into my self, I see manifestly what spirit is within me, and whether my affection carries me. To spend whole nights in dancing, feasting, revelling, quaffing, dicing and carding, hearing foolish and idle Tales, reading impure Books, calling for, and laughing at amorous Songs, playing the good fellow, and doing as the Company doth; Oh! this never offendeth me, this is pleasing and delightful to me: But to hear of Christ and his Life, to hear of Holy Men that lived formerly, who were much given to Watching, Fasting, and Prayer, or to read of their Lives, that makes no musick in my Ears, and this is an eyesore unto me: I can neither hear nor see: I stop mine Ears, and close mine Eyes for fear lest they should be offended. To hear a Sermon of an hour long, it is death unto me, and therefore I seldom come to Church: or if I do sometimes, I drive away the time, either sleeping or prating. There are too many such Men in the World: But of such it may be truly said, that they have no taste or relish at all of the Works of Christ. But now let us hear the Judgment of the Church concerning *Eternity.*

The memory of *Eternity* is so precious in the esteem of the Church, that there is no

no Psalm, no Prayer, no Hymn, but closeth with it, *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. As it was in the beginning*; that is, before all beginning, from all *Eternity*, without any beginning, *is now, and* ever *shall be, world without end*, that is, throughout all Ages; infinite, innumerable, incomprehensible Ages; to all *Eternity*. But let us leave the little Rivers, and make haste to the Fountain.

CHAP. II.

Clear Testimonies of Divine Scripture concerning Eternity.

I Will produce only three Witnesses, a *Prophet*, an *Apostle*, and an *Evangelist*.

How many and how great are the sighs and groans of poor abject and despised Men! we may hear them every day. One or other every where is complaining, Wo is me poor Man, I have few or no friends at all; I am disrespected; I am scorned and trampled under foot almost by all. Have patience a little, O Man, suffer for a while; the day of comfort will rise at length, though it seem long first. Remember

ber God's promiſe in the Prophe- *Baruch*
ſie of *Baruch*, *Caſt about thee a* 3. 2.
double garment of the righteouſ-
neſs which cometh from God, and ſet a Dia-
dem on thy Head of the Glory of the Ever-
laſting.

Others there are that accuſe Nature, complaining ſtill that ſhe hath given too long a Life to Ravens, and too ſhort a great deal unto Man. Hear thus much, you that are ſtill complaining of the ſhortneſs of Man's Life, This Life is ſhort indeed; but when this ſhort and vain Life ſhall end, there remains another Life which never ſhall have an end: If ye will not believe me, yet believe St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. 5. 2. *For we know*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, Eternal in the heavens.* What great loſs is it then, if this Earthly Tabernacle of our Body be diſſolved, when as we have a Royal Palace prepared for us, which is not ſubject to diſſolution? To the teſtimony of the *Prophet* and the *Apoſtle*, let us add the Teſtimony of the *Evangeliſt* St. *Matthew*, in whoſe Goſpel we may read theſe words of our Saviour, *Matth.* 18. 8. *If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and caſt them from thee; It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed,*

rather

rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire. O Fire! O Hell! O *Eternity*! *Time* is nothing, if it be compared with *Eternity*; shortness of life, and so loss of time is no loss at all, but great gain, if thereby we gain *Eternity*. Christ hath promised it, and St. *Matthew* hath recorded it, and sealed it in these words of our Saviour, Matth. 19. 29. *Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my names sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.* Is it not clear enough that this promise is of blessed *Eternity*, when we have security given us of receiving an hundred-fold reward? Again, Christ, according to the same *Evangelist*, forewarning of the latter Judgment, three times makes mention of *Eternity* expressly in these words, Matth. 25. 41, 45. *Everlasting fire*, or *eternal fire*, *everlasting* or *eternal punishment* and *life eternal*.

Seeing therefore the Holy Fathers, the Church, and the Sacred Scripture, do so many ways propound unto us the serious Consideration of *Eternity*; it is our part and

and duty, as many of us as look for *Eternal* life in Heaven, it is our part and duty seriously to meditate thus with our selves every one: O my God! How seldom have I heretofore thought upon *Eternity*! or if I have thought upon it, in what a cold, and negligent manner have I done it, notwithstanding every day, yea every hour and minute I draw nearer and nearer unto *Eternity*? But for the time to come by the assistance of thy *grace* I will mind it more carefully than heretofore I have done; and if at any time, through thy bounty, riches shall increase, I will not set my heart upon them: though the world should smile upon me, though I should want no temporal thing that my heart can desire, though I should seem to flow in never so much abundance, yet will I still remember *Eternity*. In the midst of my prosperity these shall be my thoughts. But how long shall this last? Will this fair weather never change? Will this comfortable Sun always shine upon me? Or if I should live in prosperity all the days of my life, what shall it profit me after death? After this sweet but short, pleasing but perilous, unhappy happiness, there shall shortly follow *Eternity*, *Eternity*. But if the World goes ill with me, if it frown upon me, if I meet with many crosses, troubles and afflictions, if misfortunes

tunes befal me, if they rush upon me like waves, one on the neck of another, if I be turmoiled and tossed up and down, then these shall be my daily thoughts. Well, let the World have its course, I am content to bear it, Gods will be done. Let the sea be troubled, let the waves thereof roar, let the Winds of afflictions blow, let the waters of sorrows rush upon me, let the clouds of tentations threaten rain and thunder, let the darkness of grief and heaviness compass me about, yea though the foundations of the World should seem to shake, yet will I not be afraid. These storms will blow over, these Winds will be laid, these Waves will fall, this tempest cannot last long, and these Clouds shall be dispelled. Whatsoever I suffer here shall shortly have an end, I shall not suffer *Eternally*, Come the worst that can come, death will put an end to all my sorrows and miseries. But no storm to that storm of Fire and Brimstone which the damned shall suffer in Hell *Eternally* and without end. All things here shall have an end, but the torments there shall have no end. Whatsoever is not within the circle of *Eternity*, is short, swift, and momentary, it is but a shadow, but a dream, so saith St. *Chrysostome*, It is but a *Modicum* or *a thing of nothing, a little, a very little, for a little while,* yea

yea, *a very little while.* Often doth our Saviour beat upon this, ſpeaking to his Diſciples. All his own ſufferings, yea his moſt bitter death upon the croſs, he calleth but a *little.* All the ſufferings, puniſhments, and violent deaths of the Apoſtles, all but a *little*: And why ſhould not I alſo think it but a *little*, whatſoever here I ſuffer, though I ſhould ſuffer it an hundred years together: *Heb.* 7. 27. *For yet a little while, and he that ſhould come, will come, and will not tarry.* I will therefore ſuffer patiently whatſoever can happen, and account one thing only neceſſary, and that is, To do nothing againſt my Conſcience, and diſpleaſing unto God. For all is ſafe and ſure with him who is certain and ſure of bleſſed *Eternity*

CHAP. III.

This life, in reſpect of that which is to come, is but as a Drop *to the* Ocean, *a* little Stone *to the* Sand *upon the Sea ſhore, a* Center *to the* Circle, *a* Modicum, *a little, a very little time, a* Minute *to* Eternity. *And ſuch are the ſufferings of this life in reſpect of the joys that ſhall be hereafter.*

MOſt true it is, whatſoever labour or ſorrow we ſuffer in this Life, it is

but a *Modicum*, or *for a little while*. It is the saying of St. *Auguſtine*, *This Modicum or little while ſeems long unto us, becauſe it is not yet all paſt and gone: But when it ſhall come to an end, then ſhall we perceive and underſtand what a little while this Modicum was.* The wiſeſt of Men being to ſhew the vanity and ſhortneſs of this preſent life, though it ſhould be lengthned to an hundred years, which few Men can reach unto; makes choice of the moſt minute things in the World, whereby to expreſs it, and ſet it forth by way of reſemblance. For thus we read expreſly in *Eccleſiaſticus*, *The number of a Mans days at the moſt are an hundred years. As a drop of water unto the ſea, and a gravel ſtone in compariſon of the ſand; ſo are a thouſand years to the days of Eternity*, *Eccleſ.* 18. 9, 10. And why then do ye rejoyce in this, ye long-lived Men, that ye have lived an hundred years? All our years are, What are they? They are *as a drop of water unto the ſea, and a gravel ſtone, in compariſon of the ſand.* And what is a little Stone to thoſe exceeding high Mountains of Sand? And what is a ſmall drop of Water to the deep and fathomleſs Sea? Such are fifty, ſixty, yea, an hundred years. (Here this, ye old Men.) They are but a *Modicum*, a very little while, but a *Minute* of time, indeed nothing

nothing at all to the days of *Eternity*. And yet, fooliſh and miſerable Men, we are overjoyed with this little Stone, this ſmall drop. Our life is indeed *a little ſtone*, but no Jewel, no precious Stone; it is made of no better matter than Sand. Our Life is a *drop*; but not of ſweet and freſh Water; it is ſalt and brackiſh as the Sea-water is. *For all his days are ſorrows, and his travel grief; yea, his heart taketh no reſt in the night*: So ſaith the *Preacher*, *Eccleſ.* 2. 23. It is the Counſel of St. *Auguſtine*, Recal to mind, ſaith he, the Years that are paſt, from *Adam* to this preſent day: Run over all the Scriptures; it is but almoſt yeſterday ſince he fell, and was thruſt out of *Paradiſe*. For where are thoſe times that are paſt? Certainly, if thou hadſt lived all the time ſince *Adam* was thruſt out of *Paradiſe*, even unto this preſent, thou wouldſt perceive and confeſs, That thy Life was not long, which is ſo ſoon fled away. For what is any Man's Life? Add as many Years as thou wilt, imagine the longeſt old Age. What is it? Is it not as a Morning-blaſt? All this is moſt true. I pray you tell me, where is *Adam* now? Where is *Cain*? Where is long-liv'd *Methuſelah*? Where is *Noah*? Where is *Sem*? Where is *Eber*? Where is moſt obedient *Abraham*? Where is *Jacob*?

where is *Joseph*? They are dead and gone, their time is past: We may say of them, *Vixerunt, fuerunt Troes*; *Once they were, now they are not.* Thus our Life passeth away; thus the Glory of the World passeth away. O morning dew! O meer vanity! What is it that we do so desire here? What so long as to be hoped or wished for here? Short it is, a *Modicum* it is, it is vile and nothing worth, it is but a small point whatsoever thine Eye beholdeth here. It is a true saying of *Gregory* the Great; The longest measure of our Life is but a point; or it is a short line that begins, continues, and ends in a point. *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye*, 1 Cor. 15. 52. all things shall have an end. *I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad*, Psal. 119. 69. Why then do we account any time long? For that which is past, now is not; that which is to come, yet is not; and what is the present? The Glass is always running, and the Clock never stands still; the Hour passeth away by flying Minutes. What is flown by, is past and gone; what is yet behind, is still to come: But where is the time which we use to call long? *Bernard* makes often mention of that most true and excellent saying of St. *Jerome*, (and Reader, it is worth observing) *No labour*

ought

ught to ſeem long unto us, no time long, in which we are ſeeking after Eternal Glory.

And yet though the Life of Man be but very ſhort in compariſon of *Eternity*, there is none of the Damned that can juſtly accuſe God for not granting him a longer Life. They muſt condemn themſelves for not living better. *There is no Inquiſition in the Grave* (ſaith *Syracides*) *whether thou haſt lived ten, or an hundred, or a thouſand years*, Eccleſ. 41. 4.

In Hell it is no time to complain of ſhortneſs of Life. Every Man hath lived long enough, if he hath lived godly enough.

Here, Chriſtian Brother, I will deal more boldly and plainly with thee, and lay the matter ſo open, that thou ſhalt ſee it clearly preſented before thine Eyes. Thou ſayeſt, That thou doſt often think upon Heaven, and that thou haſt an earneſt and longing deſire after *Eternity*. Sayeſt thou ſo? I hear thee, but I do not believe thee; neither would I have thee believe me, if I ſhould ſay ſo of my ſelf. For how can it be, O good Chriſtian Brother, how can it be, that thou or I ſhould think ſo often, and ſo ſeriouſly upon Heaven, and have ſuch a longing deſire (as we ſay we have) after *Eternity*, and yet be ſo lukewarm, yea, ſtone-cold, in Matters of Religion?

so slow and backward to that which is good, so prone and forward to that which is evil, so ready and willing to all manner of wantonness, so querulous and complaining, so slothful and negligent: Where we should be angry, there are we too patient; and where we should be patient and couragious, there are we too faint-hearted and pusillanimous. In the fire of every light Affliction, our Patience melts and consumes away; nay, we are often cast down with a Word, we are blown down with the breath of Man's Mouth; but never are we more impatient and desperate, than when our Wills are crossed. I might speak here of the hot *Apostems* of Lust, wherewith our Hearts are often inflamed and swoln, and likewise of the devouring *Cancer* of Envy, which often eats into our Breasts, and makes our Flesh consume away; but I pass them by.

Notwithstanding what hath been said, we good and godly Men, as we profess our selves, and would have others think us to be, are too timorous where we should be bold, and too bold where we should be timorous. Glory in nothing more than in this, That we have often in our minds the hearty desires, the joys of *Eternity*. Believe it, it is not credible, that the thoughts

thoughts of Heaven and *Eternity* ſhould be ſo often in our minds as we ſpeak of, and yet mean while that we ſhould live no better than we do. Did I ſay, it is not credible? Nay I ſay, it is impoſſible. And thus I ſhall declare it.

The Patriarch *Jacob* ſerved his Uncle *Laban* for his Daughter *Rachel* ſeven years, *And they ſeemed to him but a few days for the love that he bare to her*, Gen. 29. 20. Heareſt thou this whoſoever thou art that ſo complaineſt? Thou ſerveſt no impoſtor or deceiver as *Laban* was, but God thy maker, and him that will ſurely keep his covenant and promiſe. Thou ſerveſt not for a Wife, but for the Kingdom of heaven; not for the beauty and ſight of a wife, but for the beatifical viſion and *Eternal* ſight of God: not for the delight and pleaſure of a wife, but for cœleſtial and *Eternal* delights and pleaſures. And yet doth the trouble of one winters day oftentimes ſo caſt thee down, that ſuddenly all thy love towards God and thy deſire after heaven begins to wax cold in thee. As ſoon as the ſtorm of adverſity begins, thou breakeſt forth into moſt bitter complaints; thou calleſt Heaven and Earth to witneſs, thou breatheſt nothing but revenge; yea oftentimes, I believe, thou ſpareſt not God himſelf, but calleſt his juſtice into

queſtion. At other times when pleaſure with her fawning allurements hath once enticed thee, ſhe doth ſo bewitch thee, and take away thy memory, that thou quite forgetteſt to ſerve God, and ſo runneſt headlong into the *Labyrinth* of ſin, which hath a fair entrance, at leaſt ſeemingly, but leadeth thee the next way to deſtruction. Is this the vigilancy which thou ſo much talkeſt of? Is this thy heroical fortitude and love of God? How wilt thou ſerve God ſeven years, as *Jacob* did *Laban*, when (alas?) thou canſt not endure the labour and ſorrow of one ſhort day? Mark 14. 37. *O Simon, Simon, ſleepeſt thou? couldſt thou not watch one hour* with thy Lord and Maſter? but hear further concerning the Patriarch *Jacob*: He being beguiled by his Uncle *Laban*, who gave him blear eyed *Leah* inſtead of beautiful *Rachel*, ſerved him yet ſeven years more for his Daughter *Rachel*, whom he dearly loved: and no doubt but thoſe ſeven years alſo ſeemed unto him but as a few days, for the exceeding great love that he had unto her. And it is very likely, that oftentimes when he was weary at his work, he had an eye unto *Rachel's* beauty, and ſaid thus with himſelf, (Surely, for her beauty) She is worthy for whom I ſhould ſuffer ſeven years hard ſervice; and, if need were,

were, I would not ſtick to ſerve yet ſeven Years more. Such was the Affection that he bore unto *Rachel*, that it made him ſcarce ſenſible of any Labour.

Heareſt thou this, thou who goeſt for a Soldier of Chriſt? Conceiveſt thou this, underſtandeſt thou this? How then canſt thou ſtill murmur againſt God? Thou art bid to ſerve God for God's ſake, that ſo thou mayeſt at length enter into God's *Eternal* reſt: Thou art exhorted to tolerance and patience here, that ſo thou mayeſt be made partaker of Immortality with the Bleſſed hereafter: And yet ſleepeſt thou, O ſluggard? Haſt thou not an Ear to hear? Art thou ſtill complaining? *Do but reckon up the Years which thou haſt ſpent in the ſervice of God, and ſee*, whether thou haſt ſerved God faithfully and painfully twenty Years, as *Jacob* did *Laban*, I am afraid thou wilt come ſhort in thy reckoning: Haſt thou ſerved God ſo many Months? I tell thee, I make queſtion of it. Number the Nights that thou haſt ſpent in watching and praying, recount the Days which thou haſt ſpent in holy Exerciſes, and ſee if thou canſt truly ſay unto God, as *Jacob* did to *Laban*, *In the day the drought conſumed me, and the froſt by night, and my ſleep departed from mine eyes. Thus have I been twenty years in thy houſe: I*

ſerved thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and ſix years for thy cattel; Gen. 31. 40, 41. Tell me, Chriſtian Man, haſt thou ſerved God thus twenty years? Thou knoweſt thy Wages if thou ſerveſt God: Not *Laban*'s Daughters, nor flocks of Sheep; God himſelf ſhall be the Reward of thy Service: Thou ſhalt be bleſſed both in Soul and Body: It ſhall be well with thee on every ſide: Thou ſhalt injoy all manner of Delights; great Delights without either lacking or loathing, and without end. Thou ſhalt ſwim in the bottomleſs *Ocean* of Pleaſures: And yet (behold) thy Hands are ſlack to every good Work; thy Feet are ſlow to go to Church; thy Heart conſumes away with Envy, flames with Anger and Revenge, aboundeth with the vermine of filthy Thoughts, and is quite dead through Slothfulneſs and Impatience. Is this thy ſerving of God? Is this the way, thinkeſt thou, to Heaven, to immortal Life, to *Eternal* Bleſſedneſs? Surely it is not. Why doſt thou not rather, as *Jacob* did, when thou art weary with any Labour which thou undergoeſt in the ſervice of God, when the World goes ill with thee, when Adverſity preſſeth thee, Proſperity ſeduceth thee, and Labours burthen thee, lift up thine Eyes to Heaven, behold *Rachel*, who is promiſed unto thee, and thus comfort

up

up thy ſelf. Be not troubled, O my ſoul: Behold thy *Rachel*, thy *Rachel* which is in heaven, fair *Rachel*, comely *Rachel*; *Rachel* that is all beautiful, not having any one blemiſh about her! Behold heaven and the houſe of thy *Eternal* reſt and pleaſure; Be content to ſuffer for a while, a little ſorrow, and ſome pains: For thou ſhalt ſhortly be where thy *Rachel* is; and there thou ſhalt be the more joyful and bleſſed, by how much the more thou art here ſorrowful and afflicted: There ſhall thy reſt be the more pleaſant and joyful, by how much the more thy life here is heavy and painful. Well then, be of good courage, ſhew Chriſtian fortitude and patience. *Eternity*, bleſſed *Eternity* is more worth, infinitely more worth, than all that we can do or ſuffer: If thus, O Chriſtian brother, thou wouldſt animate and encourage thy ſelf, if with ſuch eyes thou wouldſt oftner look up to Heaven, if with ſuch affection thou wouldſt daily think upon *Eternity*; believe it, all the days of ſervice here on earth would ſeem but few, for the great love which thou wouldeſt have unto *Eternity*; Thou wouldeſt count all labour eaſie, all troubles welcome, all loſſes gain. This I will ſay, and therewith

with I will conclude, The more a Man thinks upon the *Eternity* of the World to come, the more care he will take here to lead a godly life in this present World.

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Thus saith the high and loftie one that inhabiteth Eternitie.

Adam lost Eternitie, Christ regained it: to this the Angels invites us from, this the devils with draw us: have a care whether thou followest.

THE SEVENTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

How Chriſtians uſe to Paint Eternity.

HE that is to go through an Houſe in the dark, muſt go warily and leiſurely, ſtep after ſtep, and he muſt grope for the Wall. If Man's Underſtanding will be prying into *Eternity*, if he thinks here in this Life to enter into it, he is much deceived: The way is dark and full of difficulties. He may hurt himſelf by the way, but he ſhall never here attain unto it. The way thither is but ſhort indeed; but when a Man is once in, there is no coming out again. And yet though no mortal Man can ſo conceive of *Eternity*, that he can certainly ſay what it is, notwithſtanding the infiniteneſs thereof is ſhadowed out by certain Pictures and Reſemblances, in ſuch manner that every Man may have a glimpſe of it. Whatſoever

ever we speak or write concerning *Eternity*, howsoever we set it out in colours, all is but a shadow, yea, a shadow of shadows: No *Orator* in the World can with all his Rhetorick, sufficiently express it: No *Limner* with all his curious Art and Skill can set it forth to the Life. If all times that ever were, and ever shall be, should be put together, they would infinitely come short of *Eternity*: The latitude thereof is not to be measured, neither by Hours, nor Days, nor Weeks, nor Months, nor Years; nor *Lustra's*, nor *Olympiads*, nor *Indictions*, nor *Jubilees*, nor *Ages*, nor *Plato's Years*, nor by the most slow Motions of the *Eighth Sphere*, though these were multiplied by a Thousand, or a Million, or the greatest multiplier or *Number numbring* that can be imagined. Neither can it be measured by any *Number numbred*, as by the Stars of Heaven, the Sands of the Sea, the Grass of the Field, the Drops of the River, and such like. The number of *Eternity* is past finding out.

The Sailers use to sound the depth of the Sea by a Plummet and a Line: Let us also let down the Plummet and Line of our humble and reverent Cogitations, to sound the depth of *Eternity*, which yet is past finding out. But if we will go by this *Map*, if we will sail by this *Chard*, if

we

we will view well this *Picture*, we shall come much nearer finding it, than otherwise we should.

Christ as a Child, taken as it were from the Manger and the Cradle, almost quite naked, and without Clothes, *stands in the Clouds: on his shoulders he bears a Cross*: *in the Clouds* there is this inscription, *ETERNITY*: *beneath Christs feet*, down upon the Earth there is the *Skeleton* of a Man, or nothing but the Bones of a Man without Hair or Skin, only he hath a Beard to be known by: *in his left hand* he holdeth a *piece of Parchment*, in which these words are written, *Momentaneum quod delectat*: *That which delighteth is momentary*: *in his right hand* he holdeth up an *Apple*. Near unto him there standeth a *Raven* pecking a shellfish, with this subscription, *Cras, Cras, To Morrow, to Morrow. The earth opens her mouth, and flames of fire break forth* and tend aloft, in which these words are written, *Æternum quod cruciat, That which torments is Eternal*. *Christ* coming down from the Clouds, *Two adore* with bended knees of divers Sex, in the place of all Mankind, *Behind them* there is a running *Hour Glass*, or a *Dial* measuring hours by the running of water, called a *Clepsydra*; and a *Book* lying

Gregor.

lying wide open. On one Page there is written, *They spend their days in mirth, and in a moment go down to the grave*, Job 21. 13. On the other Page, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. 7. 24. Before them stand *Two* heavenly *Angels*, which embrace them with their Arms; and pointing at Christ, bid them lift up their Eyes unto him. This is the *Picture*: The meaning followeth.

CHAP. I.

Christ Inviting.

CHrist the *Eternal* Son of the *Eternal* God came into this World, clad with no other Garment than we, that is, ſtark naked. The Garment of immortality and innocency we loſt by *Adam*'s diſobedience. And now (alas!) how miſerably arrayed do we come into this World? Chriſt together with us, yea for us, ſuffereth puniſhment and yet was not guilty of any ſin. But what meaneth this *Croſs upon the Shoulders* of the Son of God? It is a Bed on which he ſlept in death, *Golgotha* was his Chamber. The Thorns his Pillow, and the Croſs his Bed. Which many religious Men of former times well conſidering

ſidering with themſelves, have voluntarily and freely choſen to lie hard and take little reſt, that at the day of Reſurrection they might riſe joyfully to reſt *Eternal*. Some, as we may read, have made the Earth their Mattreſs, Sackcloth their Sheet, and a Stone their Boulſter. And many there are which do ſo ſtill to this day. But I leave them, and return to Chriſt. He ſuffered *Death, even* that moſt bitter and ſhameful *Death of the Croſs*. To what end? That he might ſave us from Death *Eternal*. Dye we muſt all of us; but our Death is but ſhort. In a moment, in the twinkling of an Eye the Soul is ſnatched from the Body, and this is all that which we call *Death*. But it is not ſo with them in Hell: Their Torments far exceed all the ſorrows and pangs of Death, not only becauſe they are more grievous for their quality, but alſo becauſe they are of longer continuance beyond all compariſon; for they are *Eternal*. So then their Torments are, always to be tormented; and their Death, to dye always. And from this Death hath Chriſt the Son of God delivered us; the *Child* that we ſee deſcribed walking amidſt the Clouds. Under his Feet is a bare *Skeleton*, or the bare Bones of a Man, which by all ſigns we may gather to be our Fore father *Adam*'s. Hearken

ye

ye Children, and ye Childrens Children, hearken unto the words of your Fore-father *Adam*, thus speaking unto you.

CHAP. II.

Adam *lamenting.*

O My Children, happy then indeed, if your Fore-father had known his own Happineſs, but now miſerable, and that even in this, becauſe mine. By me were you deſtroyed before you were begotten; by me were you damned before you were brought forth. I fain would be as God, and by that means I am left ſcarce a Man. Before you could periſh, you all periſhed in me. I my ſelf do not know, whether you may better call me a Father, or a Tyrant, and a Murderer. I cannot wonder or complain juſtly that you are ſo vicious and ſo ſinful; for you learned it of me. I am ſorry that you are ſo diſobedient; but this you learned alſo of me. I was firſt diſobedient unto God that made me. The Angels in Heaven bluſh and are aſhamed to ſee your Gluttony and Intemperance; but this is your Father's fault. Your Pride hath made you odious and deteſtable before God;

God; but this Monſter firſt conquered and triumphed over me, and ſo Pride became more proud than ſhe was before. This is the inheritance you receive from me, nothing elſe but an heap of Miſeries. God indeed of his free good Will, gave unto me by a ſure promiſe, Heaven for an Inheritance, and intailed it upon you: But I have undone you all, cut off the Intail, and prodigally made away all for one bit. I valued my Wife and an Apple more than you all, more than Heaven, more than God. A curſed and unhappy Dinner, for which I deſerved to Sup in Hell many Thouſand Years after. I lived in *Paradiſe*, a Garden full of all Delight and Pleaſure beyond imagination: God gave me the free uſe of all things therein, only the fruit of one Tree was forbidden me. I was Lord of all the Creatures, I was wiſe and beautiful, ſtrong and luſty. I abonnded with all manner of Delights. The Air was then as temperate as could be deſired; the Clouds were clad in bright blue; the Heaven ſmiled upon us; the Sun did ſhine ſo pure, that nothing cou'd be more. All things ſeem'd to gratifie us at our new Marriage. Our Eyes could behold nothing but that which was flouriſhing and pleaſing to them. Our Ears were continually filled with Muſick,

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the Birds those nimble Choristers of the Air ever warbling out their pleasant Ditties. The Earth of it self brought forth odoriferous Cinnamon and Saffron. I was compassed about with Pleasures on every side. I lived free and remote from all Care, Sorrow, Fear, Labour, Sickness, and Death. I seemed to be a God upon Earth. The Angels in Heaven rejoyced to see my Happiness; there was none that did envy me, but my self; but because I obeyed not the Voice of God, all these Evils fell upon me.

I was driven out of *Paradise*, banished from the sight of God, and for shame I hid my Face. Labour, Sorrow, Mourning, Fears, Tears, Calamities, a thousand Miseries seized upon me, and quite wearied me out: You feel it, as many as are of my Family; and that which seemeth to be the end of all Temporal Misery and Sorrow, is oftentimes the beginning of Eternal.

O my Children, learn by your own woful Experience, learn by your own loss and mine; learn, I say, to be wise at length. I will give you but one Lesson, and it is but in three words, which you shall do well to learn by heart, and that is, *To hate sin.* Behold! Do you not see *a grievous flame* breaking out hard by me?

me? It hath burnt ever ſince ſin firſt entred into the World, and ſhall never be put out. All other puniſhments are but light, and ſhall ſhortly have an end; but the damned ſhall be tormented in this flame, for ever and ever. Now, if we will, we may eſcape it. Heaven is ſet open to all; but there is no coming to it, but by the way of Repentance, and the gate of the Croſs. He that walketh in this way, and entreth in at this Gate, may be certain of his Salvation, and eternal joy in the Kingdom of Heaven, where he ſhall have an everlaſting habitation. This is the counſel of *Adam* to his Children, I ſay it is *Adam*'s counſel,

Who falling once, did make his children all
Both guilty of his puniſhment and fall.

CHAP. III.

The Ravens croaking.

NEar unto the *Skeleton* of the *Protoplaſt*, or the bare Bones of the firſt Man that God made, is the *Raven*'s place in the Picture, which maketh very much for the repreſentation of *Eternity* to the life. It is a well-known ſaying of Saint *Auguſtine*, *Cras, Cras*, that is, *To Morrow, To*

To morrow, is the voice of the Raven: Mourn therefore like a Dove, and beat thy breast. The chiefest cause, that I conceive, why most Men lose their part and portion of *Blessed Eternity*, is, because they seek it not *To day*, but defer the seeking of it till *To morrow*. For what is more frequent or ordinary, than putting off repentance till *To morrow*, *To morrow*, which God doth know we are uncertain, whether we shall live to see or no? But that we may not seem to put it off without some fair pretence, we make many fair promises unto God.

I will To morrow, *that I will,*
I will be sure to do it;
To morrow *comes*, To morrow *goes;*
And still thou art to do it.
Thus still repentance is deferr'd
From one day to another:
Until the day of Death is come,
And Judgement is the other.

But the day of promise is so long a coming, that the day of Death often preventeth it, and we are suddenly snatch'd away, and swallowed up of *Eternity*, and so plunged into the gulf; miserable Men that we are, into the gulf of everlasting horror and despair. This is it that undoeth

eth many, ſaith S. *Auguſtine*; whileſt they cry, *Cras*, *Cras*, *To morrow*, *To morrow*, the Gate is ſuddenly ſhut againſt them. Therefore the Son of *Sirach* often calleth upon us to this purpoſe, *Make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord, and put not off from day to day: For ſuddenly ſhall the wrath of God come forth, and in thy ſecurity thou ſhalt be deſtroyed, and periſh in the day of vengeance*, *Eccleſ.* 5. 7. It was truly ſaid of *Seneca* that *Roman* Philoſopher, A great part of our Life we ſpend in doing ill; the greateſt part in doing nothing, but all in doing another thing rather than that we ſhould. Not unlike to *Archimedes*, who when *Syracuſe* was taken, was ſitting ſecure at home, and drawing Circles with his Compaſs in the Duſt. For do we not ſee moſt Men, when the Eternal Salvation of their Souls is in queſtion, handling their Duſt, and ſtretching themſelves to their furtheſt compaſs, ſet upon the Tenter-hooks, as it were, and diſtracted with Law-ſuits, Money-matters, Worldly Buſineſſes, and Labours that ſhall nothing profit them at the laſt? *Eternity* is a thing they never once think of, or elſe very ſeldom, and then but ſlightly, for a ſnatch and away, as Dogs are ſaid to lap at *Nilus*. *Martha*, *Martha*, *thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one*

thing is needful, Luke 10. 41. and that is *Beatitude* or *Blessedness*: Not that on Earth, which such as it is, is yet but short; but that in Heaven, which is *Eternal.*

Before we take any Business in hand, we commonly examine it at this well-known Rule, saying, *Is it worth my pains? Shall I get my Bread by it?* Should not a Christian-Man rather in the beginning of every work, sit down and say with himself, *Shall I gain Heaven by it? Will it any thing further me in the way to Blessed Eternity?* We do not love to trouble our heads with such *Queries* as these; we put off the hearing of them till another time; we do adjourn it from one time to another, and another, and still another; and at the last day of the Term, we will grant a hearing. Foolish Men: When at last we are not able to labour, then we first begin to think of labour. When we must needs depart out of this World, then we begin to think upon another World. When we can live no longer here, then we begin to think of the Life to come hereafter. When the hour-glass of our short time is run out, then we begin to think of *Eternity.* When there is no time left for Repentance, then presently we will repent. When the Gate is shut, then we knock. But this is

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the fault of all ſinners in general, ſtill to defer their repentance from day to day. Every ſinner is ready to ſay, (ſaith St. *Auſtine*) *I cannot now, I will another time*, Alas! Alas! *If another time, why not now?* *Dionyſius*, King of *Sicily*, diſrobing *Apollo* of his Cloth of Gold, ſaid thus, *Nec æſtati nec hyemi veſtis hæc convenit. It is wear neither fit for Winter nor Summer.* In ſummer it is too heavy, and in Winter it is too cold. So do many (ſaith St. *Ambroſe*) play with God, and deceive their own Souls. They ſay, Let a young Man live according to the faſhion of the World; let him drink and dance; let him go to the Horſe-race, and to the Wreſtlers; let him go a courſing in the fields with his companions. It is for old men to ſtay at home, and not to ſtir abroad, unleſs it be to Church. This is no melancholy a life for a young Man. But when they grow old, what do they then; Then are they old and ſickly, weak and feeble: You muſt not look for theſe things of them at that age; their ſtrength will not permit: It is not with them as formerly it hath been; you muſt give them leave to take their eaſe; let them have a care of their health: This is all they have to do.

Thus we let the Summer and Winter of our age pass away, and never once think of the Eternal Spring. But let us remember our selves, and *as we have opportunity let us do good, Gal. 6.* 10. But let not our song be any more, with the Black Raven, *Cras, Cras, To morrow, To morrow*, and so let, *To day*, and *To morrow*, and the next, and so our whole life pass away, and *Eternity* overtake us before we are aware. *To morrow* is not, *To day* only is ours. So saith S. *James, Go to now, ye that say, To day, or to morrow, we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is our life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away, Jam.* 4. 13. It was a very good answer that *Messodanus* gave one, inviting him to a feast the next day, (as it is reported by *Guido Bituricensis*) My friend, saith he, why dost thou invite me against *to morrow*? I dare not for these many years secure my self, that I should live one day; for I have expected death every hour. No man is sufficiently armed against death, unless he be always prepared to entertain it. What is it else, but rashness and folly, folly and madness, and indeed meer contempt of *Eternity*, for a Man to lie down in ease

upon

upon a Feather-bed, to ſleep ſecure, ſnorting and ſnorting, and to lodge an enemy, a deadly Enemy, all the while, ſin, in his very boſom? Sudden Deaths are very common and ordinary amongſt us. How many have we heard of, that went to Bed well over Night, for ought any Man could tell, and were found dead in the Morning! I will not ſay carried away out of their beds, and caſt into Hell-fire; whether it be ſo or no, God knoweth. Have we not ſeen and known ſome that have been ſuddenly ſtruck, faln ſick, and died in the ſpace of an hour? Within an hour, yea leſs than an hour ſound and ſick, quick and dead? and yet do we (raſh and fooliſh men) procraſtinate it from day to day (that is nothing) from year to year do we defer our repentance, and the amendment of our lives; and death mean time unexpected ſeizeth upon us, and delivereth us up unto *Eternity*. S. *Auguſtine*, correcting in himſelf ſuch lingring and dangerous delay, ſuch lenitude and backwardneſs of mind and will to repent, ſaith thus, *I felt and found how I was held intangled, and I uttered ſuch lamentable complaints as theſe*, Quamdiu, Quamdiu, Cras & Cras? Quare non hæc hora finis turpitudinis meæ? *How long ſhall I defer, and ſtill cry*, To morrow, To morrow?

Why do I not now begin, even this very present hour: Why do I not break off my sinful course, and begin to live better? Thus I spake and fell a weeping for very contrition of heart.

Anthony the Great (as S. *Jerome* witnesseth) when he used exhortations to the people to stir them up to godliness and vertue, was wont to wish them always to keep in mind, and often meditate upon that saying of the Apostle, *Sol non occidat super iracundiam vestram. Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath.* And this prohibition he did not restrain to wrath only, but made it general: Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath, hatred, malice, envy, lust, or any other sin, lest it depart from you as a witness against you.

John, Patriarch of *Alexandria*, had a certain controversie with one *Nicetas*, a chief Man of that City. The matter was to be tried at Law, *John* was for the poor, *Nicetas* for his money. But for peace-sake there was a private meeting and hearing appointed, to see if they cou'd come to some composition and agreement. They met, they fell to words, they were hot at it, a great deal of cholar and stomach was shewn on both parts, neither would yield a jot, neither would depart an inch from his right. A great conflict there was be-

between them, many hours spent to little purpose: They were further off from Agreement, at length, than before; for neither would yield to Conditions propounded by either. Well, it grew late, they departed more offended and displeased one with another, than before, and so left the Suit pendent. *Nicetas* thought it a hard case to part with his Money, and the Patriarch seemed to be in the right, and to stand out in the Cause of God, and the Poor. But yet when *Nicetas* was gone, the good Bishop weighed the matter better with himself, and condemned himself for his pertinacy; and though he was in a good Cause, and knew it also, yet said, Oh I think that God will be well pleased with this implacable Wrath, and wilful Stubbornness? The Night draweth on: And shall I suffer the Sun to go down upon my Wrath? That is impious, and not according to the Counsel of the Apostle. So the good Prelate could not be at rest till he had sent unto *Nicetas*: For he out of hand sent Messengers of good esteem, and gave them this charge, that they should say no more to him but only this, *Domine, Sol ad occasum est*, that is, *Sir, the Sun is going down.* Upon the hearing of which message, there was such a sudden alteration wrought in *Nicetas*, that his

high stomach came down presently, he began to melt, his eyes did stand full swoln with tears, and he had much ado to keep them in. Out of doors he ran presently after the Messengers (for he made haste to speak with the Patriarch) and coming to him in humble manner, saluted him thus, *Holy Father, I will be ruled by you in this, or in any other matter.* Whereupon the Patriarch made him very welcome; so they embraced each other very lovingly, and became good Friends. Great surely was the vertue, and speedy was the operation of these few words, *The Sun is going down*: For presently upon the hearing thereof, a peace was concluded betwixt them, which was sought for before with multitude of words, but could not be effected. So do thou, whosoever thou art that knowest thy self guilty of any grievous Sin, if not before, towards the evening, at least call to mind those operative words, *The Sun is going down.* For what knowest thou, whether thou shalt rise again with the Sun, or no? And if thou dieſt in the night without Repentance, it is a question in which *Eternity* thou shalt have thy part, whether of the blessed, or of the cursed. Wherefore do what thou hast to do quickly, *The Sun is going down.* But have a care it go not down upon thy Lust

or

or luxury, envy or blaſphemy, detraction or theft, or upon any other grievous ſin unrepented of. Good God! What a thing is this? If there be but a ſtain in a garment, a ſpot in the face, a blot in a cap, we preſently uſe ſome means to take it out, or waſh it off. Are theſe ſuch eyeſores to us? And yet are we ſo blind within, that we cannot ſee our manifold corruptions and pollutions? Or do we ſee and ſuffer them? Can we ſuffer them, and not be troubled at them? Are we troubled and yet ſeek no means to expiate and purge them out? When we are polluted at any time with the ſtain of ſin, we ſhould labour preſently to take it out; the ſooner it is done, the better and the eaſier it is. Therefore ſaith S. *Ambroſe*, *We ought to be careful to repent*: But that is not all, our repentance muſt be alſo ſpeedy, for fear leſt the Heavenly Husbandman in the Goſpel, that planted a Fig-tree in his Vineyard, come and ſeek for fruit, and finding none, ſay unto the Dreſſer of his Vineyard, *Cut it down.* If the ſentence be once paſt, there is no avoiding the fatal blow; down it muſt. If therefore we find our ſelves once wounded with ſin, let us look for help in time. The brute beaſts which have no underſtanding, will teach us ſo much

providence. The harts of *Candy* or *Crete*, as soon as they are struck, run presently to their *Dictamnum* or Dittany: The Swallows, to cure the blindness of their young ones eyes, flie to fetch their *Chelidonium* or Celandine: The Dog, when he is sick, maketh haste to his Grass, to give him a vomit: The Toad fighting with the Spider, as soon as she feeleth her self begin to swell, crawleth to her *Plantane*, and so is recovered.

These by a natural instinct, know their own proper Medicines, and upon all occasions, presently make recourse unto them. But we poor miserable Men, more unreasonable, and without understanding, than the Beasts, are wounded every day, and that many times deadly; and yet notwithstanding we seek for no Medicine to cure our Spiritual Diseases. We use the same Diet we were wont to do; we talk as freely and merrily as ever we did; we go to Bed at our accustomed hour, and sleep according to our old compass. But *Repentance* is thy Physick that goeth against our stomachs. *Contrition* cutteth us to the heart, *Confession* seemeth bitter in our mouths: We chuse rather to continue sick, than to be cured. This is our miserable condition; so foolish are we, and void of understanding, either not knowing

knowing, or at leaſt, not imbracing that which would make for our Eternal Good.

If we would give ear unto the Counſel of the *Heavenly Angels*, which ſeem in the Picture according to their deſcription, to give direction unto us, and are indeed appointed by God, as miniſtring Spirits for our Good: If we would, I ſay, give ear unto their Counſel, then certainly we ſhould neither ſuffer our Eyes to ſleep, nor our Eye-lids to ſlumber, neither the Temples of our Heads, to take any reſt, until our Peace and Reconciliation were made with God. They put us ſtill in mind that our day is almoſt ſpent, that the night draws on, that our glaſs is near running out; that Death is at hand, and after Death cometh Judgment: But we ſecurely walk on in our old way. Let the day ſpend, let the night draw on, let the glaſs run out, come Death, follow Judgment, we are not troubled at it, we care not, we regard not; no warning of the *Angels* will ſerve our turn.

We ſweetly ſleep, and never dream of this.
Unhappy Man whoſoever thou art!

—Potes hoc ſub caſu ducere ſomnos?
And canſt thou ſleep in ſuch a caſe as this?

Canſt

Canst thou go to Bed, with a Conscience thus laden with Sin? Canst thou take any rest when thou liest in danger of Eternal Death? Canst thou lodge in the same Bed with the Brother of Death, and enter sleep into thy bosom? I can, I tell thee, that I can, and find no harm at all by it. Be not too confident; that may happen in the space of one hour, which hath not happened in a thousand. Thou art not past danger; for consider with thy self how long thou hast to live. There is no great distance betwixt thy Soul and Death, Hell and *Eternity*. It is gone in a breath. Thou mayest most truly say every hour, I am within one degree of Death, within one foot, yea, within one inch. Death need not spend all his Quivers upon thee: One Arrow, the head of one Arrow shall wound thee to the Heart, and make such a large Orifice, that Blood and Spirits, and Life and all, shall suddenly run out together. Either thou livest in a malignant and corrupt Air, or else thou art troubled with distillations, falling down from thy Head upon thy Lungs, or else there is some obstruction in the Veins, or in the Liver, or else the Vital Spirits are suffocated, or else the Pulsation of the Arteries is intercepted, or else the Animal Spirits run back

back to their Head, and there are either frozen to death, or elſe drowned. One way or other thou poſteſt to the end of thy ſhort race; and preſently thou art but a dead Man, carried away to *Eternity* in the turning of a hand, before thou couldſt imagine or think upon it. There are a thouſand ways to bring a Man to his end: I do not ſpeak of lingring Deaths, before which there goes ſome *warning*, but of ſudden Deaths that ſummon us, arreſt us, and carry us away all in a moment. He dies *ſuddenly* that dies unpreparedly. Death is not ſudden, if it be foreſeen and always expected. That is *ſudden Death* which was unpremeditated; and unpremeditated Death is the worſt of all Deaths: And from ſuch ſudden Death, *Good Lord deliver us.* It is good Counſel for every one, let him be of what Age he will; for no Age is priviledged more than another: Death hath a general Commiſſion which extends to all Places, Perſons, Ages, there is none exempt. It is good Counſel then, I ſay, for every one at all times, and in all places, and in all companies, to expect Death, and to think every day, yea, every hour to be his laſt: Then let him die, when pleaſe God, he ſhall not die ſuddenly.

How

How many Men have we heard of, whose Light hath suddenly been put out, and Life taken away, either by a Fall, or the Halter, or Poyson, or Sword, or Fire, or Water, or Lions paws, or Boars tusks, or Horse-heels, and a thousand more ways than these! As many Senses as we have, (that number is nothing.) As many parts and members as we have, (and yet that is nothing.) As many pores as there be in all the parts of our Body put together, so many windows are there for Death to creep in at, to steal upon us, and suddenly cut our throats. *Thou wast born* (saith Saint *Augustine*) *that is sure: For thou shalt surely die. And in this that thy death is certain, the day also of thy death is uncertain.* None of us knows how near he draws unto his end: *I know not* (saith *Job*, *chap.* 32. 12.) *how long I shall live, and how soon my Maker may take me away*; or (as our Translation hath it) *I know not to give flattering Titles; in so doing, my Maker would soon take me away.* In the midst of our Life, we are near unto Death: For we always carry it in our bosom; and who can tell, whether he shall live till the Evening or no? This Murderer and Man-stealer (for so I call Death) hath a thousand ways to hurt us, as by Thunder and Lightning, Storms and Tempest, Fire and Water, &c.

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inſtruments of miſchief he hath of all ſorts, as Guns, Bows, Arrows, Slings, Spears, Darts, Swords, and what not? We need not be beholding to former ages for examples of ſudden deaths. Alack! we have too many in our own days. Have not we our ſelves known many, that laying themſelves down to ſleep, have fallen in ſuch a dead ſleep, that they are not to be awaked again, till they ſhall hear the ſound of the Trumpet at the laſt day? Death doth not always ſend his Heralds and Summoners before, to tell us of his coming, but often ſteals upon us unexpected; and as he finds us ſo he takes us, whether prepared or unprepared. *Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour, Matth.* 25. 13. There is a kind of Repentance indeed in Hell: But neither is it true, neither will it profit any thing at all, for it is joyned with everlaſting, and tormenting horror and deſpair. *Now*, now is the acceptable time of Repentance, *now whileſt it is called to day.* Heb. 3. 13. *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance*, Matth. 3. 8. *The night cometh when no man can work*, John. 9. 4. Work therefore while it is day. The day, ſaith *Origen*, is the time of this life; which may ſeem long unto us, but indeed is very ſhort, if it be compared with *Eternity.*

And

And after this short day of this present life, there follows the day of *Eternity*, which is infinite long, and hath no night to come after it.

O Man, whosoever thou art, think upon these things; but thou especially, whosoever findest thy self guilty of any grievous sin. Repent and amend, remember *Eternity*, and think upon the day of Death. It is uncertain in what place Death will expect thee; do thou therefore expect Death in every place. As the Lord shall find thee when he calls for thee, so shall he also pass sentence upon thee.

Whatsoever thou takest in hand remember the end, and thou shalt never doe amiss Eccles: 7. 36.

To think upon Eternitie and not to amend our manners is to bid heaven farewell and to joyn hands with hell.

THE EIGHTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

How Christians ought not only to look upon the Emblems and Pictures of Eternity, *but come home and look within themselves, and seriously meditate upon the thing it self.*

ORder requires now, that leaving the *Psalmist*, and the rest, who have described unto us *Eternity*, we should descend into our selves, keep at home, and stay within. He is a great way from home, from himself, and from his own salvation, whosoever hath an eye to that only which is transitory, and forgetteth that which is Eternal.

The Lawyers know well enough that a Man will not let go his right and title, though it be in a matter of three-half-pence, if it be a perpetuity, and to be yearly paid for ever. Yea, it is thought

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a great Rent, if a Man be bound to pay, though but three farthings yearly, to his Land-lord, as long as the World endures. in such esteem are perpetuities, though in things little worth, though but three Pepper-Corns. If thou art so solicitous and eager in pursuing the right of three-half-pence, how comes it to pass, O Man, that thou art so negligent and careless in seeking after the Inheritance of an Eternal Kingdom, which may be had at a few years purchase? thou fallest out with thy Brother for three-half-pence, thou goest to Law with him, thou makest it a long suit: In the mean time, thou sufferest others to carry away the Inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven? What is the reason? Is it so little worth? Is it not worth looking after? It seems thou thinkest so, or else thou wouldst labour for it more than thou dost. Thou art much cumbred about other things; thou thinkest all pains little enough; thou art never weary of seeking after them: But as for *Eternity*, that thou thinkest to be a great way off, and therefore thou art scarce ever at leisure so much as once to think upon it; or, if thou art any time at leisure, then thou hast no mind to it. O!. It is a grievous thing, and very wearisome to be always looking after that which *yet* is not

here

here ever throughly to be looked into. Who would trouble his head, and weary his mind about it? We are all for the preſent. Give us preſent poſſeſſion; that is the thing we deſire, that is the thing we delight in: There is ſome content in that.

See our folly and want of diſcretion. What blindneſs is this, or rather is it not madneſs, to look for certainty where none is, and where it is, never to look for it? In a buſineſs concerning our temporal and uncertain riches, we love to be certain, we will have good ſecurity, which yet, at the beſt, is very uncertain. But concerning Eternal and certain riches, we make our ſelves ſo certain, that we look for no aſſurance; we are ſo ſecure, that we look for no ſecurity, which yet, if we would, we might have as good as could be deſired. Does any Man lend Money without a Bill, or a Bond, or a Pledge? Every Man hath this preſently in his mouth, I love to be certain; I deſire good ſecurity; I will go ſafely to work; I will not put the matter to hazard. Things preſent and certain, when we hold the balance, always weigh down things future and uncertain. *Better*, ſay we, (as the Proverb goes) *is one Bird in the hand, than two in the buſh.* And *I had rather ſee a wren in a Cage, than*

than an Eagle in the Clouds. We are of *Plautus* his mind, we carry our eyes in our hands, and believe no more than we see. What fond and fooliſh Men are we, that ſeek for certainty of ſuch things as are moſt uncertain, which deceive us moſt when we make our ſelves moſt ſure of them, which make themſelves wings and flie away, whileſt we think we have them faſt enough in our hands! But, be it known unto all Chriſtian People, what aſſurance and ſecurity Chriſt, the King of Heaven will give: What aſſurance, I ſay, of Eternal Life, Chriſt will give unto all thoſe that will enter Bond for performance of Covenants. *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* Matth. 19. 17. *Si vis ad vitam ingredi, ſerva mandata.* The Condition of this Obligation is ſuch, That if thou keepeſt the Commandments, thou ſhalt enter into life, Life Eternal: But if thou breakeſt the Commandments, in as much as thou breakeſt them, then this Obligation ſhall be void, and of none effect. For whoſoever breaketh one of theſe Commandments, and deferreth his repentance, and doth not the ſame hour wherein he hath ſinned, ſeek reconciliation and peace with God, whom he hath offended; he is in danger to loſe himſelf, and all that he

he hath, and manifeſtly hazardeth the Eternal Salvation both of Soul and Body. There is but three fingers breadth, or rather but an inch, between him and Death. For he hath within himſelf the matter of a thouſand Diſeaſes, and Cauſes, of Death! And yet raſh and fooliſh Man, he perſiſteth and continueth ſtill without fear or wit in the ſtate of Damnation; in which ſtate, if it ſhould pleaſe God to take him away ſuddenly, he is in danger to periſh everlaſtingly. Is it not a bold and fooliſh part, for a Man to adventure all that he hath at a caſt, and hazard the loſs of Eternal Riches, when he may eaſily keep them?

If a Man ſhould ſuffer in Hell but ſo many Torments, as he hath lived hours, or but ſo many Torments as he hath committed Sins all his Life; this might ſeem ſomewhat the more tolerable. If it were ſo, that in Hell there were any end of Torments, after the expiration of any certain number of Years, Men would make no end of ſinning all the days of their Life. The enemies of God would increaſe every day more and more. For albeit they know that the Torments in Hell, are ſo many in number, that they cannot be numbred; ſo long for continuance, that they cannot be meaſured; ſo grievous

for

for quality, that they cannot be endured, but with such infinite pain, that every minute of an hour shall seem a whole year. Notwithstanding all this, Men are nothing deterred from Sin, but walk on boldly, or rather run headlong to their own destruction.

If all the Torments that can be inflicted or imagined, should be heaped together upon the head of a Man for an hundred years together, they would not come near the Punishments of Hell for one year, no, not for a day, nor yet an hour. All the Punishments that Thieves, Robbers, Murderers, and such Malefactors suffer, though grievous for the time, yet they are quickly ended; in three or four days they are over, or in the compass of a week at most; but the Torments of the damned are not for an year or an age, but for ever. God shall ever punish them, because he can never punish them enough, though he punish them to all *Eternity*.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Eternity doth not only cut off all comfort and eaſe, but even all hope alſo.

IN this Life we have *Hope* for our comforter in all Calamities and Diſtreſſes, which hath a ſoveraign vertue to mitigate and aſſwage all Pains and Sorrows. And God of his great Mercy, for the moſt part, in all Adverſities, ſtill leaveth a Man ſome *Hope* to help and ſuccour. The ſick Man as long as he lives, he ſtill lives in *Hope*: As long as there is Life, there is *Hope*. But after this Life is ended, there remaineth to the Damned no more any *Hope* of Comfort. *Hope*, the laſt Comforter of all, taketh her flight, and Eternal Deſparation ſiezeth upon them. The Prophet *Daniel* ſpeaketh of an Angel coming down from Heaven, and ſaying, *Hew the Tree down and deſtroy it*, cut off her Boughs, ſhake off her Leaves, and ſcatter her Fruit abroad, *yet leave the ſtump of the Roots thereof in the Earth*, *Dan.* 4. 23. Upon which words ſaith St. *Ambroſe*, *the leaves and the fruit are ſhaken off*, *but the root is preſerved*; that is, Delights here are taken from us, and Puniſhments are inflicted upon us, but yet *Hope* is not taken away from us. Be-

hold! The Root is preserved, *Hope* is left behind. In Hell it hath no rooting. *Behold the day cometh,* (cryeth the Prophet *Malachy*) *that shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.* And *Job* lamenting cryeth out, *I am gone, and my hope hath he removed like a tree,* Job 19. 10. *The hope*, or, *the expectation of the wicked shall perish,* so saith *Solomon,* Prov. 10. 28. Therefore whilest there is time and place for *Hope*, let us have *Hope*; but let us *Hope* for such things as we ought. All humane things are vain and uncertain. The Heathen Poet tells us so much in these Verses.

Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendentia filo,
Et subito casu quæ valuere ruunt.

All humane things hang by a slender thread,
What stands most strong, is quickly ruined.

We must not therefore place our *Hope*, trust and confidence, in such things. Saint *Bernard* sheweth us a better way in these words, *Faith* saith, *God hath prepared for the faithful, great and unconceivable good things.* And *Hope* saith, *He hath reserved them, and laid them up for thee.* And *Charity* saith, in the third place, *I make haste, and*

and think it long till I come to them. True Hope, as St. Gregory affirmeth, raiſeth up the mind to the thought of *Eternity*, and taketh away the ſenſe of all outward croſſes and troubles. True *Hope* makes us to underſtand that all worldly things are vain, but a *Modicum*, but for a *moment*. But, O that moment, on which all *Eternity* doth depend! The day of death, and the hour of the extream and laſt agony, is properly that moment, and that precious Jewel; for buying whereof, the wiſe Merchant ſelleth all that he hath. But few know the worth of this Jewel. About Eternal Salvation, ſaith St. *Jerome*, every Man is negligent. But what is the reaſon that men are ſo negligent in a thing of ſuch great moment? Poor men! We are troubled with weak and ill eyes. We ſee well enough near at hand, but we can ſcarce perceive any thing afar off. I do not ſpeak of ſuch as are come to man's ſtate, or ſuch as are grown old. Boys and Girls when they are new taken from their Cradle, before they have all their teeth come forth, learn the firſt elements of vices, they ſmutch their fingers preſently with the ſoil of covetuouſneſs; and after a while, they have an unſatiable deſire after getting riches; they learn to make good Markets for them-

ſelves; if they meet with a good penny-worth, they preſently lay hold upon it, their hand is preſently in the purſe, either laying out for gain, or receiving in gain; they know how to make the beſt uſe and advantage of their money; they get an inſight into the myſteries of divers trades; they will be talking of merchandiſe, they will learn good judgment of Wines; they will tell you what faſhion and cut is in uſe beyond ſea, *Juvenal* the Poet in his Satyrs, gave theſe a laſh long ago.

This old Wives teach Boys in their Infancy,
And Girls de learn before their ABC.
Hence is riſe
Of every vice.

Hence cometh our groſs ignorance, and forgetfulneſs of things Eternal. Young and old, all do overvalue their Money; but as for Heaven and *Eternity*, they know not, neither will they underſtand the true worth of them. But let us proceed.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Eternity is a Sea, and a three-headed Hydra, *but it is alſo a Fountain of all Joy.*

I Would fain ask thee, O Chriſtian Man, whoſoever thou art that heareſt Sermons often, but ſeldom, it may be, with attention and devotion; thee eſpecially fain would I ask one queſtion. Suppoſe thou ſhouldſt take in hand to lade out all the Water in the Sea, into a ſmall River near adjoyning, which runneth back again into the Sea continually, as faſt as it is caſt out. Suppoſe thou ſhouldſt uſe no other Ladle but a very ſmall Spoon to caſt it out withal. Now tell me, How long doeſt thou think thou ſhouldeſt be in draining of the Sea: Or again, Suppoſe thou ſhouldſt draw it out with a Bucket as big as an Hogſhead; and as faſt as thou draweſt, pour it out into another Channel. Anſwer me, in how many years doſt thou think thou ſhouldſt be able to draw the Sea dry? To ſit ſcorching and frying in the flames of Hell-fire ſo many years, I know thou wilt ſay, were a grievous and wretched torment; and yet the damned would think it well with them, if it were ſo: They would like the condition well and

not think the time long, so that they had any assurance, that at length their torments should have an end, and not extend to all *Eternity*.

We read in Heathenish Authors of old time, a thing more strange than true, of a certain *Hydra* or *Snake*, which (as they feigned) had three heads, and as soon as one was cut off, had two shoot up in the place thereof. But if this *Hydra* be any where to be found, it is in Hell; where there is a threefold *Eternity*, which like the *Hydra* stretcheth out her long neck with three heads, that is, *The pain of loss, the pain of sense, and the worm of Conscience that never dieth*. What miserable and improvident Men are we, that having but a short journey to go, but full of dangers all the way, go on notwithstanding so merrily and sportingly, as if we were walking all the while through *Paradise*, or a most pleasant *Garden*, free from all fear of Enemies; and in the end of our walk, presently to be received and admitted as Citizens into our Heavenly Countrey, a place of all security! For can we be ignorant? if we be, it is our own fault. But we cannot be ignorant, that at length we shall come to the two Gates of *Eternity*, the one of the blessed, the other of the damned: And enter we must at one of them, that

that is certain; at which, God knows, it is accordingly as we ſhall behave and carry our ſelves by the way.

Laurentius Juſtinianus, wondering at the merry madneſs of ſuch Travellers, breaks forth into this exclamation, *O the lamentable condition of mortal Men, which go on exulting all the way, whileſt they are but exiles, or baniſhed men from their own Country!* Let us not ſettle our minds upon any vain joys, and fond toys by the way, whileſt we are travelling towards our Country; but let us ſo run our race, that at the end thereof, we may obtain admittance in at the Gate, which is the entrance to Eternal Bleſſedneſs. God hath indeed created us rather unto Joys and Pleaſures, than unto Labours and Sorrows; but we are much miſtaken, both of the time and place: It is not here, it ſhall be hereafter. Joys are prepared in Heaven; but none but the good and faithful Servants ſhall enter into them. And by what means may a Man obtain entrance? Knoweſt thou not what Chriſt ſaid? *The kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth violence; and the violent take it by force*, Matth. 11. 12. Think now thus with thy ſelf, Am I this violent Man? Is this the violence here ſpoken of, To eat, to drink, to riſe up to play, to lie down, to take my eaſe? It is not certainly. Fight

we must, but it must be the good fight; like Christian Champions: Run we must, but so, that we may obtain: Strive we must, but to enter in at the strait Gate: Labour we must, and offer violence to the Kingdom of Heaven; but it must be in due time and place. Now whilest we have time here, whilest we are on the way, whilest we have Life and Strength, that when we come to the point of Death, and so pass the Horizon of this World, and depart into another, never to return back again; when we shall be translated from *Time* to *Eternity*, then at the last we may have joy for our Life past, and hope for that which is to come. Let us labour therefore, let us labour, I say, and offer violence to our selves, fighting against our own froward Wills and Affections: So shall we obtain, by the Mercy of God, Everlasting Rest for short labour, and Eternal Glory for a few days travel.

True and solid Joy is not here to be found in vain Delights and Pleasures, but in Heaven, where there is Joy and Pleasure for evermore. *God prepared a gourd, and made it come over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief*, Jonah 4. 6. So *Jonah* was exceeding glad of the Gourd. And what is all the Pleasure, or rather Vanity of this present World?

World? Is it not like *Jonah*'s gourd flouriſhing for a time, and yielding a comfortable ſhadow? Rich Men have their gourd alſo, that is, their riches, under the ſhadow whereof they rejoyce with exceeding great joy. Drunkards and Gluttons have their gourds alſo, that is, great Tables and delicious fare, under the ſhadow whereof they are merry and joyful. Voluptuous Men alſo have their gourds too, that is, their unlawful pleaſures, under the ſhadow whereof they lie down and ſport themſelves, But (alas!) ſorrow follows after ſuch joy, and ſuddenly overtakes it. Their mirth is ſoon turned into mourning; and their delights and pleaſures end in gall and bitterneſs. For what became of *Jonah*'s gourd? *God prepared a worm when the morning roſe the next day, and it ſmote the gourd that it withered.* Now tell me, *Jonah*, where is thy gourd? What is become of it? Where is now thy exceeding great joy? They are both gone together, thy gourd is withered, and thy joy is ended. Such are our vain delights and pleaſures, ſuch is our joy, rather ſhadows of things than any thing indeed, they paſs away ſuddenly, and become like *Jonah*'s gourd that ſoon withered. The joy of ths World is but for a moment, but the joy of the life to come is for all *Eternity*.

CHAP. III.

Here is declared by a most memorable example, How sweet and precious the taste of Eternity is.

THis knew *Theodorus* very well, one born of Christian Parents; and, as it seems, he learned it betimes, when for years he was but a youth, but an old Man for judgment and discretion. For on a great festival day, kept throughout all *Egypt*, there being a great feast at his Fathers house, and many invited thereunto; when some were eating and drinking, others laughing and playing, and others sporting and dancing; he amidst all these jollities, retired himself to his inward Closet, finding himself wounded to the heart, but with a chaste arrow. For thus he began to expostulate with himself. Unhappy *Theodore*? What would it profit thee, if thou shouldest gain the whole World? Many things thou hast indeed, but canst thou tell how long thou shalt enjoy them? Thou livest in abundance now; thou maiest feast it, and make merry; thou maiest laugh and be fat, thou maiest rejoyce and skip for joy. But art thou sure how long this shall last? I should like it well, if it

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it would laſt always. But what ſhall I do? Shall I for the enjoying of theſe ſhort and tranſitory pleaſures and delights, deprive my ſelf of thoſe joys which are Eternal? Tell me, *Theodore*, is this according to Chriſtian Religion, to frame unto our ſelves an Heaven here on Earth, and think to paſs from Delights to Delights, from Temporal to Eternal: Either I am much deceived, or elſe Chriſt ſhewed unto us another way unto the Kingdom of Heaven, and that is through many Tribulations. Therefore have no more to do with Worldly Vanities, but prefer Eternal Joys before Temporal. Thus he ſaid and fell a weeping. So then he retired himſelf into a withdrawing Room, and there proſtrating himſelf upon the Earth, he prayed after this manner; *Eternal God, my heart is naked and open before thee, I ſend up my ſighs as humble Orators and Petitioners unto thee: I know not what to ask, nor how: Only this one thing I beg at thy hands, That thou wilt not ſuffer me to die an Eternal Death. Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee, and that I deſire to be with thee, that I may ſing Eternal Praiſes unto thee: Lord have mercy upon me.* Whilſt he was thus praying, in comes his Mother, on a ſudden, and preſently perceiveth by the redneſs and moiſtneſs of his Eyes, that he had been a weeping, and thereupon ſhe

ſaith,

saith, *My Son, What is the matter with thee? Why weepest thou? Why mournest thou? Why keepest thou out of sight to day? Why dost thou not come to the Table? The rest are all there: Thy company is desired: Come away.* But *Theodore* answered and said, *I pray you, good Mother, have me excused; I find my self somewhat ill at stomach, I pray you do not urge me to eat or drink against my stomach.* So with a fair and colourable pretence he sent away his Mouey; then being alone, he conferred with God and himself about *Eternity*, and strictly examined all the course of his Life, saying unto himself, *What am I? or, What have I been? How hath it been with me heretofore? or, How shall it be with me hereafter, if I lose my part and fellowship in the Kingdom of Heaven and Blessed Eternity: There are divers ways to Heaven: Some go one way, some another; it is no matter which way we go so we come thither. But because all ways are not alike, neither are all Natures alike, every Man ought to chuse that way which is most convenient. There is a short way, and a long; a safe way, and a dangerous. If then I be afraid to go a long and dangerous way, here is a shorter and a safer, which if I shall chuse, without all doubt, I shall have the Angels for my Companions and Comforters, and they will also rejoyce.*

Well,

Well, Theodore, *defer a while, but not too long, and do not yield too much. I hope I ſhall one day grow a ſtrong Man, and then I ſhall be better able to deal with mine enemies, for I ſhall find thoſe that are ſtrong: But what if they be eaſie, flattering, fawning, and ſuch as will even weep for me? The truth is, I am moſt afraid of ſuch. But pluck up a good heart, Man, and though by nature thou art flexible and eaſily moved, yet pray unto Chriſt, and he will make thee ſtrong and immovable. But what if thy Mother falls a weeping, beſeecheth thee with her tears trickling down her cheeks? What if ſhe hangs about thy neck; and deſires thee to ſpare thy ſelf? What if ſhe ſhews thee her breaſts which gave thee ſuck? Will not all theſe move thee? Here remember what St.* Jerome *ſaith, notwithſtanding all theſe importunities, run with ſpeed unto the Standard of Chriſt's Croſs. It is a vertue and praiſe-worthy to be cruel in ſuch a caſe as this. It is the portion and inheritance of thy Mother the Church to ſtand under the Croſs of Chriſt: So did* Mary *the Mother of Chriſt; and ſo muſt thou, if thou wilt have God thy Father in Heaven; and the Church thy Mother, on Earth: And ſo thou wilt do, if thou beeſt a true ſon and no baſtard. But muſt I do it now in mine Youth, in the flower of mine Age! that is hard: So it is, indeed, to fleſh and blood*

blood. But experience teacheth it, that God is not well pleased with late service; for late services are seldom good. Therefore they do well, that begin to serve God betimes, that seek him early, and that remember him in the days of their youth, and learn to submit their tender necks unto the yoke of Christ. But I have been brought up tenderly, I have been fed with dainties; and shall I now enter upon a strict and rigid course of Life, and bid adieu to all my pleasures? Shall I be able to endure it? I hope I shall. But, how long? For a year or two? That is not enough: I must go further, and continue to the end, even as long as I live. Therefore weigh and consider the matter well with thy self, before thou resolvest; and either never begin, or else continue to the end. I will by God's assistance; for I hope he will not leave me alone to strive with these difficulties, which of my self I shall not be able to overcome. But it is a hard matter to strive against custom. I have hitherto lived like a Nobleman, and a Freeman; and shall I now live like a Poor Man, and a Slave? Or, if I do, how long shall I live so? If I put on the Poor-man's person, and act in the Theatre of this World, when shall I put it off? At the end of the last Act. And how far is it thither? As long as it is to the last breath. Thy part is not ended till thou art to depart out of this Life.

If

If thou once comeſt forth in the Poor-man's dreſs, there is no putting it off again: Thou muſt not once think of thy Silks, Sattens, and Velvets. Purple and fine Linnen thou muſt not wear, until thou beeſt cloathed with the Robe of Immortality and Glory.

Theodore, *What thinkeſt thou? Shalt thou be able to hold out to the laſt Act? I will ſtrive what I can, and comfort my ſelf by the example of other good Actors that have gone before me. And whom ſhall I chuſe rather to follow and imitate than Chriſt, the Son of God, who voluntarily became poor, and made himſelf of no reputation, humbling himſelf above meaſure, to do and ſuffer like a ſervant, being Lord of all? And ſhall not I do and ſuffer any thing after his example? Shall not I take up the Croſs and follow him? Am I better than he? Why ſhould I be afraid to follow, when I have ſuch a Leader? For who is it? Who bids me follow him? It is the voice of Man that I hear? but it is the Will of God, whom I ought to obey becauſe he commands. But this is too high a point of Philoſophy, for a Man to forſake his riches, and to embrace poverty. And what wilt thou do,* Theodore? *Reſolve with thy ſelf what to do.*

Why do I thus long doubt and diſpute within my ſelf? Why do I waver thus between hope and fear? Have I not the example

of

of my Lord before mine eyes? Did not he suffer many things not to be uttered? Was not he nailed to the Cross, and despitefully used? He forsook his heavenly Treasures, and came poor into this World. His Birth, Life, and Death shew it. At his birth he wanted a Cradle; in his life he had not where to hide his Head; and his death he had not wherewithal to cover his Body. Naked came he into this World, and naked he went out. How was it with him in his life? He was faint to flee from one place to another. He was often wearied with Travel: scorched with heat, and dry for thirst. He was as indefatigable in doing, as he was patient in suffering, and both in an high degree. Was ever any one so well bent to poverty, so patient in labors, and so gentle and mild when he was reproached? And should I be ashamed of such a Leader? Should I blush to be called one of his followers? Shall not I be content to be such as my Lord and Saviour would have me to be? I am ready, for love of him, to suffer hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness, poverty, and such like. I am willing, for his sake, to be bound, burnt, and cut in pieces. These sufferings are but short, they cannot continue long. But the joys or torments of Eternity are long indeed; for they shall never have end. Therefore farewel all the World, and the things that are in it, I care not for you, I regard you not;

Farewel,

Farewel, I ſay ; but welcome, Eternity, whenſoever thou comeſt : Thou art the only thing that I ſeek after ; my Soul longeth after thee ; there is nothing that I deſire in compariſon of thee.

With the heat of ſuch Cogitations his Soul was ſo ſet on fire, that it was inflamed with the love of *Eternity*, which the Bleſſed ſhall enjoy in Heaven. Therefore he reſolved to take leave of his Parents, to forſake his Riches, and bid adieu to his Delights for ever. He did not reſolve haſtily, but continued in his Reſolution conſtantly. He was not ſoon hot, and ſoon cold ; he was not alter'd all on the ſudden ; he did not paſs from one extream to another ; he did not ſtrive for the higheſt pitch at the firſt, but roſe up by degrees, and became one of *Pachonius* his Scholars. You have heard the Prologue ; but there follows no Tragedy after it : For, contrary to the Law of a Tragedy, we have a ſorrowful beginning, but a joyful ending. He came forth with a *Lacryma*, but went off with a *Plaudite :* At his *Intrat*, there was weeping for Grief ; but at his *Exit*, there was clapping of hands for Joy. Thus have ye heard the Life and Death of *Theodorus*, whoſe Soul fed, as it were upon Thoughts of *Eternity*, and was delighted therewith, as with marrow and fatneſs. He was not

of

of the World's mind, which counteth *Eternity* but a Fable; but refuſed not himſelf to become a Fable and a by-word in the World, being perſwaded fully of a *Bleſſed Eternity*, and earneſtly deſiring and thirſting to have a part in it.

Chriſtian Brethren, ſhall I ſpeak a free word, but a true? Or, not I, but *Theodorus*. Moſt Men live ſo, as if there were no ſuch thing as *Eternity*, as if it were but a meer Fable and a feigned thing. But what do I tell you of *Theodorus*? Will you hear what St. *Peter* ſaith? *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the Earth alſo and the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up. Seeing then that all theſe things ſhall be diſſolved, what manner of men ought we to be in all holy converſation and godlineſs?* 2 Pet. 3. 10. But where are thoſe Men now a-days, by whoſe holy Converſation and Godlineſs a Man may judge that they believe St. *Peter*, that the day of the Lord is coming, and that *Eternity* ſhall follow after? But if you will not believe St. *Peter*, hear what Truth it ſelf ſaith, *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat*, Mat. 7. 13. Certainly Men would not go in at the broad

broad gate of destruction, if they did think they should come out no more, if they did once dream of *Eternity*. But, as I said before, most Men make *Eternity* but a feigned thing, a witty invention to keep Men in aw, and a good honest fable. And yet how many are apt to say, We believe that there is a *Blessed Eternity* after this life, we hope to have part in it, we have a desire and longing after it! But (alas!) how little is their faith! how vain is their hope! how cold is their desire! Present pleasures, money in the hand, the allurements of the flesh steal away the hearts of many, and by little and little, make the desire and love of *Eternity* grow quite cold in them, as if they had drowned and buried it in the grave of oblivion. We hear it often read and preached: *Thus saith the Lord, This is the Commandment of the Lord*: And as often as we hear it, we still neglect it. Say the Lord what he will, command what he will, our old way pleaseth us best, *We will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Ask ye now amongst the Heathen, who hath heard such horrible things? Jer.* 18. 12, 13. Had the people which knew no God, but known these secrets of *Eternity*, certainly they never would have contemned and neglected them. *Go to now, O ye sons of Men,*

Men, because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hands, and no Man regarded, I will also laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you, Prov. 1. 24, 26, 27. When *Eternity* shall suddenly overtake you. If Death seise upon you in this miserable state and condition, there is then no hope of mercy: The Gate is presently shut, there is no opening of it: The sentence of condemnation is past, there is no repealing of it. *Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, Matth.* 25. 41.

Watch therefore good Christians, watch I say; The Judge stands at the Gate. That may happen in a minute, that you may be sorry for, for all *Eternity*. *Anthony* the Great, in a certain Sermon which he made to the people, spake thus unto them. *Dearly beloved Brethren, in matters of this life we have a care to make good bargains, we will be sure to have a penny-worth for a penny.* I lay out for instance, so much money, and I have the worth of it in wares; I give so many crowns, and I have so many bushels of Wheat; so many pounds, and I have so many quarters of Malt. But we are not so wise in Heavenly matters; we will not

give

give things Temporal, in exchange for things Eternal. Eternal life is a thing not worth looking after, we much undervalue it, we will ſcarce give any thing for it, we will not take any pains or labour to obtain it. And yet what is our labour, ſuppoſe the greateſt we can undergo? If it be compared unto life Eternal, the reward of it, it will not amount to ſo much as one halfpenny, in reſpect and reference to a Million of Gold. For what ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *The days of our life are threeſcore years and ten; and if by Reaſon of ſtrength they be fourſcore years, yet is their ſtrength, labour and ſorrow*, *Pſal.* 90. 10. But ſuppoſe a Man ſhould live an hundred years, to ſpeak with the moſt, and all that while ſerve God zealouſly, and faithfully, were it not time well ſpent to gain *Eternity*? were not the labour well beſtowed, to purchaſe a Kingdom? I do not mean a Kingdom to continue for an hundred years only, but throughout all ages; not an Earthly Kingdom, but the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, Chriſtian Brethren, be not puffed up with vain glory, be not ambitious after woldly Honour, be not wearied out with well-doing, be not caſt down with afflictions, do not ſink under the burden of the Croſs, but bear it patiently and chearfully, *Rejoycing*, with the Apoſtles, *that ye*

are

are counted worthy to suffer, Rom. 5. 3. *For I reckon*, saith St. *Paul*, *that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us*, *Rom*, 8. 18. Let no Man when he hath forsaken the World think that he hath forsaken any great matter. For what's Earth in comparison of Heaven? It is but a Center to the Circle, a Minute to *Eternity*, a Drop to the Sea, and a grain of Dust to the Dry Land. What are our riches? Fading and uncertain moveables. We are soon taken from them, or they from us. Though with much ado we keep them as long as we live, yet whether we will or no, we must part with them when we die; we cannot carry them to our Graves. Why do we not then make a vertue of necessity? Why do we not willingly part with them, whilest they are ours, seeing that shortly we must part with them, whether we will or not, when Death attacheth us for a debt due to Nature, and then they can be no longer ours? Why do we not lay them out like good Merchants for the *Margarite* or precious Pearl of Eternal life? Thus sweetly goes on *Athanasius*; But I must leave him, and draw to a conclusion.

Pachonius was wont, whensoever he felt any unlawful thoughts or desires arise in his mind, to drive them away with the remembrance

membrance of *Eternity*; and if at any time he perceived them to rebel again, he still repell'd them by meditating seriously upon *Eternity*, the Eternal Punishments of the Damned, the Torments without end, the Fire that never goes out, and the Worm that never dieth. And here I will conclude this Consideration with the Exhortation of the same *Pachomius*. *Before all things*, saith he, *let us every day think upon the last day; let us in time remember Eternity; let us every minute we have to live, so live, as if we lived in fear of Everlasting Torments; that so by the Mercy of God in Jesus Christ, we may for ever escape them.*

THE

Good Master what good thing shall I doe that I may have Eternall life!
Math. 19. 10

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the Kingdome of God. The love of riches & of Eternitie are scarce resident in one hart.

THE NINTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

The first Conclusion.

NO Man living is able in word to express, or in thought to conceive the infinite space of *Eternity*. Between a true Man, and a painted Man, true Fire and painted Fire, there is a great deal of difference, and yet these are in some kind one like unto another. But between our common fire and the fire of Hell, between the sorrows of this Life, and the pains of Hell, there is no comparison, no proportion at all. For this Life, and the sorrows of this Life, are measured by space of Time; but the Life to come, and the sorrows thereof cannot be measured by any thing but only *Eternity*, which also is without measure. This doth our Saviour most elegantly express in the Gospel of St. *John*, by the Parable of the

vine branch, *if a Man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and Men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned, John* 15. 6. In these words is *Eternity* briefly and plainly described: For mark the words well; they run not in the *future*, *He shall be cast forth, and shall wither, and Men shall gather them, and shall cast them into the fire, and they shall be burned*; I say they run not in the *future*, but all in the *present* tense, *He is cast forth and withered, and Men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. They are burned.* This is the state and condition of the Damned, *They are burned*, that is, *always burning*. When a thousand Years are past and gone, as it was in the beginning, so it is still, *They are burned*: And when a thousand and a thousand more yet are gone, as it was, so it is, *They are burned*. And if after certain millions of Years the question be asked, What is now the state and condition of the Damned? What do they? What suffer they? How fares it with them? There can be no other answer made but this, *They are burned*, still burning *continually*, *inutterably*, *Eternally*, from one Age to another, even for ever and ever. Upon this place excellently saith St. *Augustine*, One of these two must needs be the condition of the Vine-

Vinebranch, either it muſt abide in the Vine, or elſe be caſt into the fire; if not in the Vine, then certainly in the fire. But that it may not be caſt into the fire, let it ſtill abide in the Vine.

The ſecond Concluſion.

IF thoſe Men which do ſtill continue in their ſins, did but know how near they are unto *Eternity*, and everlaſting torment; if they did conſider well with themſelves, how that *God* in a moment, in a breath, in the *twinkling* of an eye (as we ſpeak) may ſuddenly take them away in their ſins, and deliver them up unto death; then ſurely, if they had it, they would give all *Spain*, all the treaſures of *Aſia*, all the Gold of *India*, yea all the World to obtain but one hour to confeſs their ſins, to repent them of the ſame, and to ask God pardon and forgiveneſs: They would not, certainly they would not, ſtill hug and embrace their ſins, they would not every day multiply them as they do, they would not lodge them every night in their boſom, and lye ſnorting in them, *Matt.* 16. 27. *For what is a Man profitted, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul?* Though thou loſeſt every thing elſe in the World, yet, O Man, have a care to keep

thy soul. It were needless here to reckon up a *Catalogue* of the Martyrs of Christ in all ages. There are whole books of them in great volumes: they are recorded to all posterity, and their names shall be had in everlasting remembrance. But the greatest honour that we can do to them is to follow their good example, to learn of them Christian fortitude and magnanimity, to fear God more than Man, *Matth.* 10. 28. *God which is able to destroy both body and soul in Hell, rather than Man which can only kill the body, but is not able to kill the soul:* to love God more than all the World; to be willing to part with all for Christ, to lose all to save our souls, and gain *Eternity.* I will conclude here with that excellent exhortation of St. *Augustine*; What then shall we do, brethren? What? What else but whilest we have time amend our lives, where we have done amiss, do so no more; become new Men; That what is threatned and shall certainly come upon wicked and ungodly Men, may not fall upon us; not because we shall not be, but because we shall not be like unto them: Whatsoever is written in the Scripture, is written for our learning, it is the voice of God. Observe and make good use of what you read: Whatsoever we suffer in this life is but the gentle rod of our most mer-

merciful Father, who correcteth us here as his dear children, that we be not tormented with the damned hereafter. Why then do the light afflictions of this life ſeem ſo grievous unto us? Why do we even tremble and quake for fear, when we do but hear of them? The moſt grievous ſufferings of this life, if we judge aright of them, in compariſon of everlaſting fire, are very ſmall, yea indeed none at all.

The third Concluſion.

AMongſt Chriſtians, God knoweth there are a great many, that either believe there is neither Heaven nor Hell, or elſe if they did truly believe it, they would certainly live otherwiſe than they do. As concerning ſuch Men, the queſtion may be very fitly asked, *Luke* 18. 8. *When the Son of Man cometh ſhall he find faith upon the earth?* Some there are that would fain be thought to be true Believers; They confeſs it indeed with their mouths, but diſſemble with their double hearts; If their words may be believed, they may go for true believers; but if their lives be examined, they may be thought to be no better than Infidels. They never think upon *Eternity*, or very ſeldom; and when they do, they do but think upon it and there

is all; it is gone in a thought, they never weigh well with themselves what it is, they never seriously meditate upon it, they never rouse their understanding to be intent upon it, they never bend their wills and affections to seek after it, they never imprint it in their deep cogitations that so they may remember it. They scarce begin to think upon it, but their minds are presently somewhere else, their thoughts go a wandring, their imagination is working upon somewhat else. And if at any time some sparks of Devotion and godly desires arise in their hearts, they are presently quenched and choaked with cares of this World, with multitude of business, with *profits* or *pleasures*, and such like. And thus miserable Men they stop their ears, and close their eyes, and without fear or understanding they run hoodwinkt in the way that leadeth to *Eternal* death. It is observed by the holy Fathers of the Glutton in the Gospel, that he never lifted up his eyes till he was in torments; All his life long they were shut against the poor and against all godliness: He opened them not till he was in Hell, when it was too late. And it is no marvel that so many Men run blindfold to the house of slaughter, and *Eternal* sorrow: for the way is very broad and pleasant, smooth

and

and plain; a Man can hardly go out of it, there is no fear of losing himself till he comes to the end thereof. Then he shall perceive that all the while he was travelling, he was quite out of the right way: then I say, when there is no returning back again. Many would like this way well, if there were no end thereof: For, though it rids merrily, it ends merrily: and therefore they do wisely, that leave the great road, and travel on in the rough way; that choose rather to go through briers and thorns unto an *Eternal Paradise*, than through a pleasant *Paradise* to an *Eternal Prison*; that resolve with themselves to break through all difficulties; counting it better to go on weeping and mourning, in the narrow way of Salvation, rather than laughing and rejoycing in the broad way of Destruction. Most true it is which *Job* speaketh, *As the cloud is consumed, and vanished away; so he that goeth down to the grave, shall come up no more: He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more*, Job 7. 9.

The fourth Conclusion.

WHosoever useth to descend into a deep and serious Consideration of

Eternity, he will be so far from living licentiously and wantonly, that you shall hardly ever see him laughing heartily. It hath been observed of as many as have been raised from the dead, and turned again unto life, that they were scarce ever seen to laugh at all. In particular it hath been observed of *Lazarus* of *Bethany*, whom Christ loved. He and they, as many as have been raised from the dead, might truly say with the *Preacher*, *I said of laughter, It is mad*; *and of mirth, What doth it*, *Eccles.* 2. 2. Not without cause in this doth *Cyril* of *Alexandria* confess himself to be fearful: For he saith thus, I am afraid of Hell and the punishments thereof, because they have no end; I am afraid of the devouring Worm, because it never dieth, *O that they were wise*, *that they understood this*, *that they would consider their latter end*! *Deut.* 32. 19. Whosoever is not better by the Consideration of *Eternity*, (I dare boldly say, and think I may say it truly) either he hath no Faith at all; or if he hath any Faith, he hath no heart at all; or at the best it is but an heart that is dead, and without all sense. It was the witty saying of a learned Man, That Marriage was a short and a sweet song, but that it had a doleful close: So we may most truly say of all the pleasures that we take

take in hand, that it is a ſhort and a merry ſong, but it ends in mourning and lamentation; or rather it is a ſong *ſhort* for *time*, and *ſweet* for *tune* as long as it laſteth; for it runs much upon *quavers*, and *ſemiquavers* of *mirth* and *jubilation*. But the *time* ſuddenly changeth, and the *tune* is altered; for there follows without any *reſt* the *larges* and *longs* of *ſorrow* and *lamentation*; which cannot be meaſured by any *time*. For the torments of Hell are *Eternal*. *Oh Eternity, Eternity, Eternity!*

The fifth Concluſion.

WHenſoever we ſpeak of *Eternity*, we ſpeak always with the leaſt, but we can never ſpeak too much of it. Whatſoever is ſaid comes ſhort of it. No words can utter it, no figures can number it, no time can meaſure it. For *Eternity* is of this nature: take from it what you will, it is ſtill the ſame. It is neither increaſed by addition, nor diminiſhed by ſubſtraction. Suppoſe there were ſubſtracted from it ſo many years as there are ſtars in the firmament, drops in the Sea, ſands on the ſhore, leaves on the trees, graſs in the fields, motes in the Sun, duſt on the earth: What remains? As much as there was before the *Subſtraction*: Suppoſe there were ſo many

years added to it: What then is the *Result?* The same that it was before the *Addition.* The *total sum* is neither more nor less, than what it was, that is, *Eternity.*

As long as God is, so long shall the damned be tormented. This we have shadowed out before by some similitudes and resemblances, unto which we will add one more out of *Bonaventure.* If one of the damned, saith he, should weep after this manner, that he should let fall but one tear in an hundred years, and those tears should be kept together so many hundred years till they would equal the drops of the Sea: Alas! Alas! (Not to speak of the Sea.) How many millions of years must needs pass before they can make one little river! or if they should at length make a whole Sea of water: yet even then it might truly be said, *Now Eternity beginneth.* And if he should weep again after the same manner till he made another Sea; yet then also it might be said again as truly as before, *Now Eternity beginneth:* and so on forwards for ever. Let no Man once doubt of the truth hereof; for between that which is finite and that which is infinite there is no proportion. But this seems wonderful and strange unto us, because our imagination cannot conceive it: It cannot reach unto that which is so far remote;

note; It cannot penetrate into that which is infinite, for that is impenetrable. And that is the reaſon that our underſtanding is ſo hardly drawn to the Conſideration of *Eternity*; becauſe it bluſheth in a ſort, and is aſhamed, or elſe for indignation cannot endure to tire it ſelf in the ſearch of that which cannot be found out. But let us put away this fooliſh and ſhameful modeſty, and let us force our underſtanding to the due and ſerious Contemplation of *Eternity*, and let it be our daily exerciſe to be ſtill meditating upon ſuch ſimilitudes, as may in ſome ſort ſhadow it out, and repreſent it unto us: And ſo ſhall we never do amiſs. Say what we can, think what we will, imagine ſo many millions of millions of years as it is poſſible for the mind of Man to conceive, we ſhall ſtill come ſhort of the meaſure, and length of *Eternity*: The years of *Eternity* are more, far more, yea infinitely more. This is certain, and without all Controverſie.

The Prophet *Daniel* ſignifieth the incomprehenſible dimenſion and length of *Eternity* in theſe words, *They that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteouſneſs, as the ſtars for ever and ever*, Dan. 12. 3. Mark theſe words, *For ever and ever*. As if he ſhould have ſaid, No words are ſufficient

to

to expreſs the nature of *Eternity*. It is *for ever and ever*. Here is all that I can ſay of it. Though more might be ſaid in reſpect of its own nature, yet I am not able to ſay more. Obſerve his *Auxeſis*, or his *augmentation* of it by *multiplication*: *For ever*, that is, for *Eternity*: But he thinketh that not ſufficient, and therefore he doubles it, *and ever*. And yet in the Latin it is expreſſed more fully, in theſe words, *In perpetuas Æternitates*, *To perpetual Eternities*. Mark here, he ſaith not, *In Æternitatem*, *To Eternity*, barely in the *Singular Number*; but *In Æternitates*, *To Eternity* in the *Plural*, as if one were not enough: Neither doth he reſt here indefinitely, ſaying, *To Eternities*, nor yet doth he add any finite term, becauſe none can expreſs it, but an infinite, *Perpetuas*, *Perpetual*; *In perpetuas Æternitates*, *To perpetual* or *Infinite Eternities*. Now if one *Eternity* is without end, what are two? what are ten? what are an hundred? what are infinite! If we ſhould multiply the great year or years a thouſand times, it would not amount to the leaſt fraction of the numberleſs number of *Eternity*. They ſay that the Eighth Cœleſtial *Orb* or *Sphere* is moved wonderful leiſurely beyond all compariſon: For though it be daily wheeled about by the rapid motion of the *Primum mobile*

mobile, yet it finiſheth not its own proper circuit, but once in thirty ſix thouſand years, and this ſpace of time they call, *The great year*, or Plato's *year*. But compare this with *Eternity*, and it will appear to be but a moment, but an inſtant, but a minute, indeed nothing at all. It is a true ſaying of *Boetius*, that an inſtant, or point of time, and ten thouſand years, compared together, keep better proportion, than ten thouſand years and *Eternity*. But hear what St. *John* ſaith, *Little children, it is the laſt time, or the laſt hour*, 1 *John* 2. 18. And this he ſaid one thouſand ſix hundred years ago. It is moſt true therefore what S. *Auguſtine* ſaith, whatſoever hath an end, that thing is but ſhort. *Eternity* is a *word* conſiſting but of four ſyllables, but it is a *thing* without end. Therefore ſet thy love upon *Eternity*. Let Chriſt be thy end, and thou ſhalt reign with Chriſt without end.

The ſixth Concluſion.

IT is not to be believed that any Man that hath but the leaſt ſmack of true Religion, can be ſo far carried away by his impotent and unruly Paſſions (if he be not as bad as a Beaſt,) ruled meerly by ſenſe, and ſerving only his ſenſual Appetite; for the

the wicked and ungodly Man, even then when he is almoſt ſwallowed up in the deep Pit, whereinto his Sins have plunged him head-long, even then, I ſay, doth but laugh at it, regards it not, is not a jot troubled at it: It is not to be believed, I ſay, that any Man that hath any Religion at all in him, can be ſo far carried away by his headſtrong and unbridled Paſſions, but if he will ſpend a part of an hour every day in meditating upon *Eternity*, yea if he will but once in a week ſeriouſly think upon it, he will mend his Manners, he will change the courſe of his Life to better, he will certainly become a new Man: Of a proud Man, he will become humble and lowly; of an angry Man he will become mild and gentle; of an unclean Man, he will become chaſte and continent; of a drunken Man, he will become ſober and temperate. He will put on, not the outward, but the inward habit of a true religious and godly Man. He will become ſuch a one, not in Clothes and outward Expreſſion, but in Heart and inward Affection. Neither will he raſhly and unadviſedly, ſlightly and negligently, upon a ſpurt, all at once, on the ſudden, paſs from one extream to another: (ſuch alterations are not good, (neither will they continue long) But he will again and again weigh the mat-

ter

er well with himſelf, he will conſider well upon it, he will faſten his ſerious thoughts upon it, he will often revolve in mind, *Eternity, Eternity, Eternity*, that ſhall never have end, end never, never end; which ſhall laſt throughout innumerable, incomprehenſible, infinite ages. This will he do with conſideration and attention, and often ruminate upon it, as beaſts chew the cud. Meat though never ſo good and wholſome, if it be not chewed in the teeth, prepared in the mouth, digeſted in the ſtomach, turned into blood, and diſtributed by the veins into all parts of the body, turns to poyſon rather than to nouriſhment, begets all manner of diſeaſes, is retained perhaps ſometime in the body, but doth more harm than good, were a great deal better out than in. Even ſo the thoughts of Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell are good and wholſome, godly and holy, but none more than the thought of *Eternity*, which may worthily be called the *Quinteſſence*. But as it is with meat, not the taking of it meerly into the mouth, but the good digeſting of it in the ſtomach, the turning of it into good blood in the Liver, and the diſtributing of it into all the parts by the veins, nouriſheth the body: So it is with thoſe precious thoughts of *Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell*, and *Eternity*: not the bare

bare thinking upon them, but serious thinking upon them with our selves, setting a part all cares and worldly distractions, the ponderings of them well in our hearts, and the often ruminating upon them, this is it that feedeth and nourisheth the soul. If this be not done, the rest is to little purpose: without this even the reading of the holy Scriptures is fruitless, the hearing of the word preached is unprofitable. Many hear Sermons often, read the Scripture over and over again, and yet are little bettered by it, because they do not meditate upon what they have both read and heard. When they hear, what comes in at one ear goes out at the other: when they read, the eye is no sooner off from the book, but what was read is soon slipt out of memory. Before they can practise what they have heard or read, they have quite forgotten what they should do. Therefore if we will read or hear with profit, we must spend some time in meditating and pondering with our selves what we have read and heard. This lesson we may learn of the blessed Virgin the mother of our Lord, Luke. 2. 19. *But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.*

The ſeventh Concluſion.

FEW or none believe, or elſe do not well underſtand and weigh with themſelves theſe words of Chriſt, *Matth.* 7. 13. *Enter ye in at the ſtrait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat:* 14. *Becauſe ſtrait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* This again our Saviour repeats by the mouth of St. *Luke*, Luke 13. 21. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate: For many, I ſay unto you, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able.* *Auguſt.* Whoſoever laughs at this ſaith, and therefore will not believe becauſe he doth not ſee; when that ſhall come to paſs which he did not believe, he ſhall bluſh and be confounded, he ſhall be confounded and ſeparated from the bleſſed; he ſhall be ſeparated from the bleſſed, and have his portion with the damned.

Hieronymus Plautus reports of a certain Woman, that hearing *Bertoldus* a powerful Man in the Pulpit inveigh very vehemently and bitterly againſt a Sin that ſhe knew her ſelf guilty of, fell down dead in the Church; and after a while, by the Bleſſing of God, upon the Prayers of the Congregation coming

coming again unto her self, related unto them what she had seen in this Trance, saying thus, Methought I stood before God's Tribunal, and threescore thousand Souls more with me, called together from all the parts of the World, to receive their final Sentence: And they were all condemned and adjudged to *Eternal* Torments, but only thee. Oh! what a fearful thing was this! I should hardly believe this Womans relation, but that I believe Christ's asseveration in the Gospel, *Matth.* 7. 13. *Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat*: And again, *ver.* 4. *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* It may seem strange to Flesh and Blood that God the Father of Mercies should pass the Sentence of Condemnation upon so many, I do not say threescore thousand, but threescore thousand thousand? And what Man would believe it, were he not perswaded of the Truth thereof, upon the Consideration of the Sovereign and Infinite Majesty of God which is offended? The unutterable malice of Sin which is committed, and many evident testimonies of Scripture by which it is plainly proved; *Job* trembles at it, saying, *Job* 10. 22. *A land of darkness, as darkness it self, and of the shadow of death, without*

without any order, and where the light is as darkneſs, or according to the Latin, *where there is no order, and where everlaſting horror dwelleth.* St. *Matthew* affirms as much in the words of our Saviour, *Matth.* 25. 41. *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire.* Let us conſider theſe things well with our ſelves, and whileſt we have time let us wash away our ſins with the tears of repentance, for fear leſt God ſuddenly ſnatch us away, and give us our portion to drink with hypocrites in the bottomleſs pit of hell, where there is nothing but weeping and gnaſhing of teeth, where the worm never dieth, and the fire never goes out, from whence there is no redemption, no redemption, I ſay, and again I ſay, no redemption; No, not any comfort at all, not ſo much as a little drop of cold water. If the godly themſelves, who are in the ſtate of grace and in the favour of God, whoſe minds and wills be good, if they, I ſay, could ſufficiently conceive from what grievous torments they ſhall be delivered at the day of judgment, and into what unutterable and unconceivable joys they ſhall enter, without doubt they would uſe no delay, they would not let an hour paſs, but out of hand they would take their leave of all vanities, forſake the World, and leave the dead to look after the dead: But as for them

themſelves, they would be daily and hourly well imployed about their Maſters buſineſs, always ſtudying to pleaſe God, ever lauding and praiſing him for his goodneſs and mercy towards them, in bleſſing them in part here in this World, and giving them an aſſured promiſe of everlaſting bleſſedneſs in the World to come, for delivering them from the torments of Hell, and giving them entrance into the joys of Heaven. It is the ſaying of St. *Gregory*, The evils of this preſent life ſeem the more hard unto us, the leſs we think upon the good which ſhall follow hereafter. And becauſe we conſider not the exceeding great rewards which are laid up for us, therefore we count the afflictions of this World grievous to be born: whereas if we did lift up our minds, and raiſe our thoughts to the contemplation of thoſe things which are *Eternal*, and not ſubject to any change; if we would have an eye unto them, and ſet our hearts upon *them*, we would certainly count the ſufferings of this life, and whatſoever hath an end, to be as nothing; and again, *joy in tribulation* is a ſong in the night: For although we are outwardly afflicted with the ſenſe of ſorrows *Temporal*, yet we are inwardly comforted with the hope of joys *Eternal*.

Much after the ſame manner reaſoneth St.

St. *Auguſtine*: If thou wouldeſt but attend, ſaith he, unto what thou ſhalt hereafter receive, thou wouldeſt count all the ſufferings of this preſent life to be but light, and altogether unworthy of the glory which ſhall be revealed. For brethren, (to ſpeak of the worth of things) for *Eternal reſt* a Man ſhould be content to undergo *Eternal labour*, and for *Eternal joy* willingly ſuffer *Eternal ſorrow*: But if the labour and ſorrow where *Eternal*, when ſhould a Man come to reſt and joy *Eternal*? Therefore upon neceſſity thy *tribulation* muſt be but *Temporal*, that ſo at length thou maieſt receive a reward which ſhall be *Eternal*. For hang up the ſcales, and put *Eternity* in one, and a thouſand years in the other: what do I ſay, a thouſand years, yea ten thouſand, yea an hundred thouſand, and yet more, a thouſand thouſand, they are all too light to weigh with *Eternity*; there is no compariſon betwixt them. And yet further, to make them more light; As they are but *Temporal*, ſo likewiſe they are but ſhort, and of no continuance, they laſt but for a few winter-days, when they are at the ſhorteſt, or rather but for one day, and that a ſhort one; the day of this life which is ſoon paſt, and they are gone. Though a Man therefore ſhould ſuffer all his life long even to the laſt breath, though he ſhould

ſuffer,

ſuffer, I ſay, labours, griefs, ſorrows, imprisonment, ſcourge, hunger, thirſt, all his life long, even to the laſt breath, yet his ſufferings are but ſhort, becauſe his life is but ſhort. For *the days of our Pilgrimage are* but *few*, though *evil*, as *Jacob* told *Pharaoh*, *Gen.* 47. 9. And *Job* 14. 1. *Man that is born of a Woman* is *of few days*; though as *Job* complaineth, *full of trouble*. And *Pſal.* 39. 5. *Behold*, ſaith *David*, *thou haſt made my days as an hand breadth*, (and that is but a ſhort meaſure, and yet he goeth further) *and mine age is as nothing before thee*. And as our *Life* is *ſhort*, ſo is our *Affliction light*: but *it worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, 2 *Cor.* 4. When this *ſhort life* and *light labour* is ended, we ſhall inherit *everlaſting life*, an *Eternal Kingdom*, and felicity without end: We ſhall be made equal to the Angels, *heirs of God*, *and joint-heirs with Chriſt*, *Rom.* 8. 17. Oh! For how little labour, how great a reward! and again, St. *Auguſtine* in another place, *The Thoughts of God are very deep*. Where is the thought of God; and what is his purpoſe; He letteth the reins looſe for the preſent, but afterwards he will draw them in. Do not rejoyce and ſport thy ſelf, like the fiſh in the water, which having got the bait in her mouth, playeth up and down, but being

ſtruck

ſtruck with the hook in the Jaws, may be pulled up at the Fiſher's pleaſure. The time which ſeems long unto thee is indeed but ſhort, very ſhort. For what is the Life of Man compared with *Eternity*? Wouldeſt thou be patient and long-ſuffering? Conſider God's *Eternity*: Doſt thou only conſider thine own days, which are but few and ſhort, and doſt thou think that in them all things ſhall be fulfilled? That the wicked ſhould be condemned, and the godly crowned? Wouldeſt thou have all theſe things fulfilled in thy few and ſhort days? God ſhall fulfil them in his own time. God is *Eternal*. God is patient and long-ſuffering: And thou ſayeſt, But I cannot be patient and long-ſuffering, becauſe I am not *Eternal*. But thou mayeſt be if thou wilt: For do but joyn thy Heart to God's *Eternity*, and thou ſhalt be *Eternal* with him. If thou beeſt a good Chriſtian, and well inſtructed in the fear of the Lord, thou wilt certainly conclude, God hath reſerved all unto his own Judgment. The good and godly Men are troubled and afflicted: For God chaſtiſeth them as his own Children. But the wicked and ungodly Men come into no ſuch trouble and affliction: For God caſteth them off, and condemneth them as aliens. A certain Man hath two Sons; He chaſtiſeth the one, and letteth the

the other go without any Chastisement: The one, if he goes never so little awry is presently buffeted, whipped and scourged; the other, let him do never so ill, he never hears of it, he is not so much as once rebuked for it. What is the reason: He that is punished, is the Father's Heir; and he that goes unpunished is disinherited. For what should the Father do? He sees there is no hope of him, and that he is past Grace, and therefore he lets him alone to do what he listeth. But yet notwithstanding, the Son which is ever and anon punished for the least Offence, will be ready to bemoan and deplore his own case, and count his Brother happy which goeth unpunished. He will, I say, unless God hath given him a wise and understanding Heart, to know what maketh for his own good. He will be apt to say in his Heart, My Brother followeth all ill Courses, taketh his Pleasure, wasteth his Means, doth what seemeth good in his own Eyes, is ever breaking my Fathers Commandment, and hath never an ill word for it. But the case is otherwise with me: If I be but out of sight never so little while, if I go but to the next door, if I do but step aside, stir but a foot, but an inch beyond my bounds, presently I am called in question, Sirrah, where have you been; there is no hope of pardon, I am sure

ſure to ſmart for it. This is my caſe. And I ſay, Thou art in a far better caſe than thy brothers; and if thou beeſt not a fool, thou wilt think ſo too: For in that thou art corrected, it is a ſign that thou art beſt beloved. If thou thinkeſt only upon thy preſent ſtate, it cannot but ſeem grievous unto thee; But if thou haſt an eye to the inheritance which is reſerved for thee, again it cannot but ſeem joyous unto thee. For the aſſurance of thy future reward will quite take away the ſenſe of the preſent ſmart.

Hitherto may be added out of the ſame holy Father that which followeth, as the ſum of all that hitherto hath been ſaid. How great and wonderful is the mercy of God! He ſaith not, Labour thou for ten hundred thouſand years together; nor yet one thouſand years, nor yet, five hundred years. But what? Labour thou whileſt liveſt; it is but for a few years; after that thou ſhalt have reſt, ſuch reſt as ſhall have no end. Conſider this well with thy ſelf, Thou art injoyned to labour but for a few years, and amidſt thy labour art not without ſome joy, not a day paſſeth in which thou mayeſt not receive comfort and conſolation. But rejoyce not thou after the manner of the World, but as the Apoſtle exhorteth, *Phil.* 4. 4. *Rejoyce*

in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoyce: Rejoyce in Christ, Rejoyce in his Word, Rejoyce in his Law, For it is true which the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 4. 17. *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory.* Consider what a small price thou art to give, but the husk of an Acorn, for everlasting treasures: The husk of thy short labor, for rest Eternal. Hast thou joy for a time? Do not trust too much to it. Art thou sad and sorrowful for a time? Do not despair of joy and comfort. Neither let prosperity puff thee up, nor adversity cast thee down. God hath promised unto thee *Eternal Life*; Therefore contemn *Temporal felicity*. He hath threatned *Eternal Fire*; Therefore contemn all *Temporal sorrows*.

To conclude then with the same Divine Author; Let us therefore be in love with *Eternal Life*; and thereby we shall come to know how much we ought to labour for the obtaining of it; for we see that those Men which are lovers of this present life, which is but temporal, and shall shortly have an end, labour with might and main to preserve and prolong it as long as they can. And yet they cannot escape death; for that at one time or other will seize upon them. All that they can hope for, is but

but to put it off for a little time. When Death approacheth, then every one is labouring and seeking to hide himself, ready to give and part with any thing that he hath to redeem his Life. He sends for the Physician, he will be ruled by him in any thing, he will take any thing at his hands, he will suffer any thing, Purging, Bleeding, Cupping, Scarifying, and what not? You see what charge a Man will be at, and what pains he will voluntarily endure, to live here, though but for a short time; and yet he will scarce be at any charge, or take any pains, after this Life ended to live for ever. Brethren, it should not be so. If there be such labouring and watching, such sending and going, such running and riding, such spending and paying, such doing and suffering, to live here a while longer; what should we not willingly do and suffer to live for ever? And if they be accounted wise, which labour by all means they can to put off Death a while longer, being loth to lose a few days; what fools are they which live so, that finally they lose the day of *Eternity*.

Think upon those things well with your selves, O mortal Men, and foresee the day of *Eternity*, whether of Joy or of Torment, before it cometh. For although all other things pass away, yet *Eterni-*

ty ſtill remaineth, and ſhall never paſs away.

CHAP. I.

The Puniſhment of Eternal Death.

THE *Meſſenians* had a certain Priſon or Dungeon under Earth, void of Air and Light, and full of Helliſh horror; which as it was a moſt diſmal place, ſo had it alſo a glorious title; for it was called the *Treaſure-houſe*. This Priſon, or Dungeon, had no Doors at all to it, only one mouth, at which the Priſoners were let down by a Rope; and ſo it was ſtopped up again with a great ſtone. Into this *Treaſure-houſe* was *Philopæmon*, that great Emperour of *Greece* caſt, and there by Poyſon he ended his Life; God hath alſo his *Treaſure-houſe* under Earth, if I may ſo ſpeak: But, I pray you, what a one is it? It is of moſt wicked and ungodly, deſperate and damned Men.

Aſſiolinus, a Tyrant of *Padua*, (as *Jovius* reporteth) had many Priſons ſo infamous for all kind of Miſeries and Torments, that whoſoever were caſt thereinto counted their Life miſery, and their Death happineſs. Death might come in there with-

without knocking, he was ſo welcome unto them, and ſo long looked for. For this was their hard uſage; they were laden with Irons, ſtarved with Hunger, poyſoned with Stench, eaten up with Vermine, and ſo in a moſt miſerable manner they lived, and dyed at length a long and lingering Death. There every one was judged moſt miſerable, but he that was dead, and could feel no miſery. Whileſt they lived it was a puniſhment worſe than Death to have their habitation amongſt the dead. For the dead Bodies lay on heaps rotting amongſt the living in ſuch manner, that it might be truly ſaid there, that the dead killed the living.

But the very worſt of theſe Priſons is a *Paradiſe*, and a moſt pleaſant place, if it be compared with the infernal Priſon of Hell. Whatſoever miſery was ſuffered in *Aſiolinus* his Priſon, in this regard it was tolerable, becauſe it was of no long continuance, being to laſt no longer than a ſhort Life, and quite vaniſhing away at the hour of Death. But the Treaſure-houſe of the damned, which is God's Priſon, is void of all comfort: The Torments thereof are intolerable, becauſe they are *Eternal*. Death cannot enter in there, neither can thoſe that are entred get out again: But they ſhall be tormented for

evermore. For *evermore*? What a fearful thing is this? They shall be tormented for *evermore*. It was a most true saying of *Cassiodorus*. As no mortal Man can apprehend or understand what the *Eternal Reward* is, so neither can any Man conceive or imagine what that *Eternal Torment* is.

The *Persians* had a Prison into which a Man might enter easily, but being once in, could get out no more; or if he did, yet very hardly. And therefore it was called *Lethe*, or *Oblivion*. It is an easie matter to descend down into Hell; but to ascend up again it is altogether impossible. Was ever any heard to return from Hell? This Prison of Hell is not without just cause called *Lethe*, or *Oblivion*. For God is so unmindful of the damned, that he will *never* remember them to have Mercy upon them. Hell is called the Land of *Oblivion* or *Forgetfulness*, and that for two reasons, (as a Godly and Learned Writer observeth.) First, Because, saith he, they remember God no more for their good, neither have they any memory at all of things past, but such as doth afflict and torment them All their pomp and glory, pleasures and delights, are quite forgotten, or else not remembred without grief and sorrow. Secondly, To those that are in this horrid Region, and Lake of Fire, God

hath

hath forgotten to be gracious, and merciful, neither will he send his Angels at any time to minister, unto them the least comfort: If once in, there is no coming out again. For what said *Abraham* unto the rich Glutton frying in Hell; and desiring him to send *Lazarus* to cool his tongue with a drop of water? *Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence, Luke* 16. 26. Oh gulf full of horrour and despair! Oh *Eternity* of torments, the very thought whereof is able to make a stout Man quake and tremble! The wicked and ungodly Men dig their own Graves, and dwell therein for evermore: But what manner of Graves do they dig; they dig as deep as Hell, where the rich Glutton was buried, from whence *he lifted up his eyes in torments and saw* Abraham *afar off, and* Lazarus *in his bosom, Luk.* 16. 23 To his greater torment. Oh what a terrible deep is this! Oh what a fearful Grave is this! Who lieth here? He that suffered *Lazarus* to lye at his Gate, having no compassion on him. How is it with him now? He lodgeth in flames of Fire instead of his soft Bed: he is scalded with thirst, and his sweet Cups are taken from his mouth; his Table is removed, and he hath no other

Food but Fire and Brimstone; he is not now dancing and exulting for joy, but gnashing his teeth for hellish desperation. They that are shut up in Prison here in this World, have hope for their comfort; it may be they shall be delivered, and redeemed out of Prison; But from Hell there is no deliverance, no redemption, no not so much as any hope at all, but Eternal desperation.

It is a short, but a terrible Sermon that God preacheth by the Prophet *Ezekiel* in these words, *Say to the Forrest of the South, Hear the word of the Lord, Behold, I will kindle a Fire in thee, and it shall devour every green Tree in thee, and every dry Tree: the flaming Flame shall not be quenched, Ezek.* 20. 47. How many tall Cedars, how many wicked and ungodly Men flourish and wax green in this life for prosperous success in all outward things, and yet are dry and withered for want of virtue! Hear this therefore every green, and yet dry and withered Tree, *I will kindle a Fire, saith the Lord, and the flaming Flame shall not be quenched.* In Hell, whither you make such great haste, there are no Holydays, no Festivals, no set times in which the Fire shall cease burning. There is Eternal grief, Eternal death, Eternal sorrow, without the mixture of the least comfort

comfort. Night and day there is no reſt, no ſleep at all, but continual watching and waking for grief, and anguiſh, and intolerable Torments in Everlaſting Fire. There ſhall you always have your being, that you may always be tormented: There ſhall you always live, that you may always die. If you will not believe me, believe *St. Auguſtine*, whoſe words are theſe; The ungodly, ſaith he, ſhall live in Torments; but they which live in Torments ſhall deſire, if it were poſſible, that their Life were ended. But Death hears them not, there is none to take away their Life; their Life ſhall never end, becauſe their Torment ſhall never end. But what ſaith the Scripture? The Scripture doth not ſo much as call it Life. For Life is a name of Comfort. But what Comfort can there be imagined in Tortures and Torments, frying and broiling in Everlaſting Fire? But what doth the Scripture call it? *The Second Death*; that is, a Death which followeth after the firſt and natural Death which is common to all Men. But how can the ſecond Death be called a Death, ſeeing that he that hath part therein never dieth? We may better indeed expreſs what it is not, rather than what it is. As it cannot properly be called a Death, ſo it may be truly ſaid that it is no Life: And as con-

cerning them that have part therein, as they cannot properly be ſaid ever to die, ſo again it may be moſt truly ſaid that they never live. For ſo to live, that a Man ſhall always live in ſorrow and torments, is not to live. Therefore that life is no life; but the only life indeed is that life which is bleſſed; and that life only is bleſſed, which is Eternal. Again, we have another place in the ſame Father to this purpoſe; If the Soul liveth in Eternal Torments, tormented with the unclean Spirits, this is rather to be called Eternal Death, than Eternal Life. For there is no greater or worſe Death, than that Death which never dieth.

St. *Gregory* alſo giveth the like Teſtimony. In Hell, ſaith he, there ſhall be Death without Death, and without End, becauſe Death ever liveth, and the End ever beginneth: There Death ſhall never die. Oh Death, how much ſweeter wert thou if thou wouldſt take away Life, and not compel thoſe to live, who would fain die! But ſo it is, the number of the years in Hell are without number. It paſſeth the skill of the beſt *Arithmetician* to find out the number thereof. God himſelf knoweth no end thereof. After a Thouſand Thouſand Millions of Years paſt, there are ſtill as many more to come, and when

when thoſe alſo are paſt, there are yet as many more to come; and ſtill they are as far from the laſt as they were at the firſt. It is now above five thouſand years ſince *Cain* that ſlew his Brother *Abel*, was caſt into the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimſtone; and yet the number of the years throughout which ſtill he is to be tormented, is as great ſtill as it was the firſt day of his torment; and after certain Millions of years, the years of his torments for their number ſhall be nothing diminiſhed: It ſhall be all one as if he were caſt into the Fire but this preſent hour. And though the rich Glutton mentioned in the Goſpel, be tormented two thouſand years together, yet ſtill he doth burn, and ſhall burn for ever; neither ſhall he obtain ſo much as a little drop of water, though he uſe never ſo much intreaty, not ſo much as a little drop of water to cool his inflamed tongue.

Theſe things we often hear of, and when we hear of them, we do but laugh at them. Certainly we count it but a light matter to burn in Eternal Fire. Here a Man might well ask the Queſtion, *Where are your tears, O mortal Men, ye that are given ſo much to laughing*: This is our condition: A ſmall loſs if it be but a matter of three half pence, will wring great:

great ſtore of tears from us: but as for an infinite and irrecoverable loſs, that we can brook eaſily, we can digeſt that with laughter. When we are cited to appear at the Barr of an earthly Judge, then we quake and tremble: but as we are going to God's Tribunal, (for every day we rid ſome of our way, we walk on, ſtep after ſtep, will we, nill we; and (yet as we are going) we ſport by the way. When we go to Sea, we are afraid of Shipwrack: But without either fear or wit we lanch into the deep Sea of *Eternity*, and make but a laughing matter of it.

It is the wiſh of St. *Bernard*, Oh that Men were wiſe! that they were wiſe! Oh that they were wiſe! What then, holy *Bernard*? Oh, then would the Image of *Eternity* begin to be reformed in them; Then would they order things preſent wiſely, judge of things paſt underſtandingly, and foreſee things to come providently.

Here we have St. *Paul's* command to the *Epheſians*, and not his wiſh only, for his words run in the *Imperative mood*, and not in the *Optative*: Brethren, *See that ye walk circumſpectly, not as Fools but as Wiſe, Redeeming the time, becauſe the days are evil*, *Eph.* 5. 15, 16. The great buſineſs of our Salvation, ought circumſpectly,

ly, diligently, and carefully to be regarded of us. It is the moſt fooliſh thing in the World for a Man having but little time allotted him, to ſpend it prodigally in vain delights, whereas he ſhould like a thrifty Merchant imploy it rather for his beſt advantage, to purchaſe a portion in bleſſed *Eternity*. If we think to gain Heaven by ſporting, playing, and idling, we are much deceived. To be telling of Tales, or giving ear unto them when they are told; to be given to our eaſe, and ſpend our time in idleneſs; to be calling for our Cups, and ſit ſo long at them till we cannot ſtand. This is not to redeem the time. But this is truly to redeem the time, to give our ſelves to labour and ſtudy, prayer and meditation; not for a ſpurt and away, but to hold on in this courſe conſtantly unto the end; This, I ſay, is truly to redeem the time. It is the counſel of St. *Auguſtine*, to ſteal ſome time from our worldly buſineſs. Will any man ſue thee at the Common Law? Be content ſaith he, to loſe ſomething, that thou mayeſt be at leiſure to ſerve God, and not follow Suits: for that which thou loſeſt, is the gaining of time. For as thou giveſt thy money and buyeſt Bread; ſo be content to loſe thy money, that thou mayeſt buy reſt, and opportunity to ſerve God:

for

for this is indeed truly to redeem the time.

So ought we to spare for no cost, but willingly part with any thing to gain an opportunity of doing good, seeing that the days are evil. The days of this life are full of sorrows, griefs, dangers, and tentations; which ever and anon take from us the opportunity of doing good; so saith *Anselme*. But if we let slip the opportunity of doing good when it is offered, and let our days consume away in meer purposes of amendment of Life, without bringing them to good effect: from henceforth it is in vain to look for any opportunity of doing good; we shall not obtain one minute of time; our loss is altogether irrecoverable. Our life, saith *Nazianzen*, is like a *Mart* or a *Fair*: When the day appointed is once over, there is no more buying any commodities. If then we will buy any thing, we must do it quickly, whilst the Fair lasts: We must live godlily, whilest we have time to live. We must serve God whilest we are strong and able. The Preacher often beats upon this, *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*, *Eccles.* 9. 19. The Apostle often spurs us on to lay hold upon opportunity, and make good use of our time. *As therefore we have opportunity, let*

let us do good to all Men, Gal. 6. 10. For *now it is high time to awake out of sleep*, Rom. 13. 11. Thou sleepest, saith St. *Ambrose*, but thy time sleepeth not, it runneth apace, yea it flies with wings. Happy he, happy they that think upon these things, to do thereafter; that live so, as at the point of Death they will desire to have lived; to do such things, as they will rejoyce to have done when they are Translated to *Eternity*. *A light neglect now will prove an Eternal loss*. Whatsoever we think, speak, or do, once thought, spoke, or done, it is Eternal, it abideth for ever.

CHAP. II.

The Reward of Eternal Life.

THE Life in Heaven is Life indeed, and the most perfect and absolute Life of all others, in that it is *Animal*, in that it is *Humane*, in that it is *Angelical*, yea in that it is *Divine*. There lives the *Memory*, by the perfect remembrance of all things that are past: There lives the *Understanding*, by the knowledge and vision of God: There lives the *Will*, and enjoyeth all manner of good, without fear of losing it.

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In like manner liveth there the *Appetite*, both that which is called *Concupiscible*, and that which is called *Irascible*. There live all the *Senses*, and are filled with Delights. There is heard no sighing, no lamentation, no grief or sorrow, nor so much as the least sign thereof. There is the most sincere and pure song of Joy, without the mixture of the least drop of the Gall of Bitterness and Sorrow. Let the *Eyes* be silent, they never saw the like; let the *Ears* be silent, they never heard the like; let thy *Heart* be silent, it could never conceive the like to this Life. This Life includeth within it self all pleasures, riches, honours, and all the delights of all lives, senses, and faculties. St. *Augustine*, as it were set on Fire with the fervent desire of this Life, breaketh forth into these words. How great Happiness shall be there, where there is the presence of no Evil, and the absence of no Good? Where we shall be continually praising God, who is all in all; *Blessed are they that dwell in thy House; they will be still praising thee, Psal.* 84. 4. All the faculties of our Souls and members of our Bodies being made incorruptible, shall be ever setting forth the praise of God. There shall be true Glory and Praise indeed,

Auguſt. de Civitate Dei, cap. 30.

deed, where neither he that doth give praiſe and glory can be deceived, nor he to whom it is given can be flattered. There ſhall be true honour indeed, which ſhall be denied to none that is worthy, nor beſtowed upon any that is unworthy, yea, which none that is unworthy ſhall deſire or ſeek after; where none that is unworthy ſhall be permitted to abide. There he which is the giver of virtue, ſhall be the reward thereof: for he hath promiſed himſelf; and what could he promiſe greater and better than himſelf? The Prophet *Jeremy* is witneſs of this his promiſe, in theſe words, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People, Jerem.* 31. 33. I will be unto them whatſoever with honeſty can be deſired, I will be unto them life, and health, and food, and plenty, and glory, and honour, and peace, and every good thing: For this is the meaning of theſe words, *God ſhall be all in all*: He ſhall be the end of our deſires. And one great good there is to be found in that bleſſed City of God, which is not elſewhere to be found, and that is this, That no inferiour there ſhall envy his ſuperiour, but they ſhall be like members of the natural body compacted together in a friendly and peaceable manner; where the finger deſireth not to be the eye, nor the foot

foot the head, but every member is content with his own place. And a little after saith the same Father, there shall we keep an Eternal Sabbath of rest, and there shall we taste and see how sweet the Lord is, we shall be filled with his goodness when he shall be all in all. O God my God! Thou art Love and Charity, Truth and Verity, true *Eternity* and Eternal Felicity.

August. de Civitat. Dei.

Another speaketh unto this life, by way of *Apostrophe*, after this manner, in thee there is no corruption, nor defect, nor old Age, nor anger; but perpetual peace, and solemn glory, and everlasting joy. And continual solemnity. There is joy and exultation, there is an Eternal spring. There is always the flower and grace of youth and perfect health.

Autor. libr. de. Spir. & anima.

Non est in te Heri nec Hesternum:
Sed est idem Hodiernum.
Tibi salus, tibi vita,
Tibi pax est infinita:
Tibi Deus omnia. That is,
Yesterday was with thee never;
But to day is present ever:
Thou hast peace that ever lasteth,
Health and life that never wasteth;
God is all in all.

Gle-

Glorious things are ſpoken of thee, O City of God, Pſal. 87. 3. In thee have their habitation all thoſe that rejoyce; in thee there is no fear, in thee no ſorrow. All deſires are turned to joys. Whatſoever a Man can wiſh for is preſent with thee: Whatſoever can be deſired, is in thee in abundance. *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy Houſe; and thou ſhalt make them drink of the River of thy Pleaſures, Pſal.* 36. 8. *For with thee is the Fountain of Life; in thy light ſhall we ſee light,* 9. When we ſhall ſee thee in thy ſelf, and thee in us, and our ſelves in thee, living in everlaſting felicity, and enjoying the Beatifical Viſion of thee for ever.

And though this felicity be everlaſting; yet a Man may obtain it in a ſhort time, and with little labour. *I have compaſſion on the multitude,* ſaith our Saviour, *becauſe they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat, Mark* 8. 2. Sweet Saviour, doſt thou count it ſuch a matter for us to abide with thee three days, and eat nothing? And why, ſweet Jeſus, doſt thou not rather tell us of the days of *Eternity,* and the everlaſting joys wherewith we ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied in the Kingdom of Heaven? God taketh notice of the leaſt ſervice that we perform, and

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it is precious in his sight: He telleth the very hairs of our heads; and much more then will he tell the drops of blood that are spilt for his sake, and put them up in the Bottle of his Remembrance.

We may therefore very well cry out with St. *Hierome*, Oh! How great a blessedness is this, to receive great things for small, and Eternal Things for Temporal; and further to have the Lord our Debtor! But thou wilt be ready to say, it goes hard to be in sufferings every day; and though all other things might easily be endured, yet Death is terrible. Christian Brother, I am ashamed to hear thee say so, it is foolishly spoken, and like a Child. Knowest thou not thus much? I know that I ascend to descend, flourish to wither, am young to grow old, live to die, and die to live blessed *Eternally*. *Trust* therefore *in the Lord for ever: For in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, Isa.* 26. 4.

Again, St. *Augustine* comes into my mind, who upon the Words of our Lord saith thus, Our Lord and Saviour concluded with these words, saying, *These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life Eternal, Matth.* 25. 46. It is Life Eternal that is here promised. Because Men love to live here upon Earth, therefore Life is promised unto them:

them : And because they are much afraid to die, therefore Death Eternal is threatned unto them. What wouldest thou have? Life; Well, thou shalt have it. What art thou afraid of? Is it Death? Well, thou shalt not suffer it. But they which shall be tormented in Hell Fire, shall have a desire to die; and Death shall fly from them. *To live long* therefore is no great matter; yea more, *To live always*, is no great matter; but *To live blessed*, that is a thing to be desired, that is a great matter indeed.

Therefore thou shalt live in Heaven, and shalt never die; there shalt thou live blessed for evermore; for neither shalt thou suffer any evil; neither shalt thou be in fear of suffering it; for there it is impossible to suffer any evil. There shalt thou possess whatsoever thou canst desire; and what thou possessest, thou shalt desire still to possess: Thou canst not be cast out of possession, and this shall satisfie thee. It was there, that *David* did expect to have his thirst quenched, and his hunger satisfied. *In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are Pleasures for evermore, Psal.* 15. 11. And again, *My soul thirsteth after thee, Psal.* 141. 6. And yet again, *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when*

when I awake with thy likeneſs, Pſal. 17. 15. This is a new and a ſtrange voice for a King: He hath his Table well furniſhed with all kinds of Diſhes; and yet as if he were hunger-ſtarved he hopes to be filled at anothers Table; his own Bread and his own Wine would not ſerve his turn, to appeaſe his Hunger, or to quench his Thirſt. There was other Bread that he had a mind to, and other Liquor that he ſo thirſted after, the Bread of Heaven, and the Water of Life. For what is the plenty and abundance of all the Kings of the Earth? It is nothing elſe but meer want. And what is the dainty Fare at their great Tables? It is but like the Beggars Pitcher, if it be compared with the Fatneſs of God's Houſe, and his Heavenly Table. Come Eat and Drink, and be filled, my beloved, ſhall the King of Heaven ſay; this Feaſt of mine ſhall never be ended; there ſhall come no ſorrow after it; as it is *To day*, ſo it ſhall be *For ever* and *ever*. Neither can St. *Auguſtine* here contain himſelf, but he breaks forth again into this Exclamation, Oh life of lives ſurpaſſing all life! Oh everlaſting life! Oh life bleſſed for ever! Where there is joy without ſorrow, reſt without labour, riches without loſs, health without ſickneſs (there is no ſuch matter in this life) abundance without defect,

defect, life without death, perpetuity without corruptibility, beatitude without calamity; where all good Men are in perfect charity, where all knowledge is in all things, and through all things; where the Majesty of God is seen in presence, where the mind of the beholders is filled with the bread of life: They always behold God's presence, and still they desire to behold it; they desire to behold it, and yet without anxiety; they are satisfied with it, and yet without satiety.

And that thou mayest understand and know, good Christian Brother, that this super-excellent Glory, these cœlestial Riches, this Heavenly Kingdom is to be bought, hear what the fame St. *Augustine* saith, I have to sell, saith God, I have to sell; come and buy it. Lord, what is it that thou hast to sell? I have rest; Come and buy it. What is the price of it? The price is labour. And how much labour is Eternal rest worth? If thou wilt speak the truth and judge aright, Eternal rest is worth Eternal labour. It is true indeed; but do not fear: For God is merciful. For should thy labour be Eternal, thou shouldest never attain to rest Eternal; but that thou mayest attain at length to rest Eternal, therefore thy labour shall not be Eternal; *Eccles.* 5. 7.

Eternal; not but that it is worth so much, but that thou mayest at length get the possession of it. Indeed it is worth the price, though it be labour Eternal; but that it may be purchased and possessed, it is necessary that the price thereof be but labour Temporal. Therefore Christian Brethren, let us rouse up our selves, and stir up one another with this exhortation of St. *Augustine*, which here followeth.

Let us set before our eyes the life which is Eternal, and let us well consider the nature of it, which we shall come the better to understand, by removing from it, whatsoever we account troublesome in this life. For it is easier to find what it is not, rather than what it is. And yet it is set to sale. Thou mayest buy it if thou wilt. Thou shalt not need to be much troubled or turmoiled about it, for the greatness of the price. The price is whatsoever thou hast, and no more. Never examine what thou hast, but consider what thou art. It is worth thy buying, though thou givest thy self for it. Give thy self, and thou shalt have it. What? Art thou to sell thy self? Art thou thou to buy thy self? Behold, such as thou art, if thou canst be content to give thy self thou shalt have it. But thou wilt be ready to say it may be, Alack! I am a wicked Man; and such

ſuch a Man perhaps will not be received for good payment: If thou beeſt not already good, do but give thy ſelf, and by ſo doing thou ſhalt become good, and go for current. Do but make a faithful promiſe to give thy ſelf; and this ſhall make thee good, and being made good, thou art a price of thy ſelf good enough: And thou ſhalt have, as I ſaid, not only health, ſafety, life, and ſuch like as ſhall have an end; but alſo thou ſhalt be freed from many miſeries: Thou ſhalt neither be wearied, nor ſtand in need of reſt, thou ſhalt neither hunger, nor thirſt, neither increaſe nor decreaſe, neither grow young nor wax old, becauſe there is no being born there; for there is full growth and ſtature, and the entire and perfect number of years. There is no number like unto it: For as it hath no need of being augmented, ſo is ther no need of being diminiſhed. Behold what excellent things are ſpoken of it! And yet I cannot come near telling thee what it is, or what good things are treaſured up in it: For it is written, *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of Man*, 2 *Cor.* 2. 9. And how ſhall my mouth be able to utter what the heart of Man is not able to conceive?

And becauſe we have gone along

through St. *Augustine*'s Book, as it were through so many pleasant Gardens, and are now brought at length to the Cœlestial *Paradise*, let us seal and confirm what hitherto hath been spoken by the testimony of the same Father. If we were every day, saith he, to suffer all torments, yea the torments of Hell it self, and that for a long time together, to the end that we might behold Christ in his Glory, and have communion and fellowship with the Saints; were it not worth our pains and sufferings! who would not suffer any sorrow to be made partaker of so much good, and so great Glory? Let the Devils then lie in wait for me, let them assault with temptations; let my Body be brought down with fasting, let my flesh be kept under with pressure; let me be wearied with labours, let my moisture be dried up with watching; let one Man clamour against me, let another disquiet me, let me be bowed together with Cold, let me be set on fire with heat; let my conscience murmur, let my head ach, let my breast be inflamed, let my stomach be troubled with ventosities, let my countenance wax pale and bleak, let me be full of infirmities; let my life consume away with grief, and my years with mourning; let rottenness enter into my bones, and let it spring up like

a Fountain under my feet; let all theſe miſeries come upon me, ſo that I may have reſt and conſolation in the day of tribulation, and aſcend up unto the people of the Lord. For, What ſhall be the Glory of the juſt, and how great ſhall the joy of the Saints be, when every face ſhall ſhine as the Sun! When the Lord ſhall begin to reckon up his people in their diſtinct orders, in his Fathers Kingdom; and when he ſhall render unto every Man according to his works, the rewards which he hath promiſed, that is, *Heavenly* for *Earthly*, and *Eternal* for *Temporal*.

Think therefore upon the days of old, and call to mind the years which are yet for to come. Think upon *Eternity*, O Man, think upon *Eternity*; think upon the *Eternity* of Torment, and the *Eternity* of Joy, which is to follow after this ſhort life is ended, and I dare warrant thee, thou wilt never complain of any Adverſity; thou wilt never let ſlip out of thy mouth ſuch a word as this, *This is too grievous*, or, *This is intolerable*, or, *This is too hard:* Thou wilt, I dare ſay, count all things eaſie and tolerable whatſoever can happen in this life, and thou wilt never be better pleaſed, than when thou art moſt afflicted.

It is reported by *John Moſchus*, one of

Olympius, an old Man of singular patience (who lived cloystered up in a Monastery near unto *Jordan*) that he had his mind so bent and fixt continually upon *Eternity*, that he had scarce any sence or feeling at all of any temporal sorrow or misery. For, (as he goes on with his story) upon a time, as it happened, a certain Religious Man turned out of his way to visit him, and finding him in a dark Cell, a place, as he thought, uninhabitable by reason of heat and swarms of Gnats and other Flies; not without much admiration spake thus unto him. And canst thou, *Olympius*, endure to live in such a close Room, so exceeding hot, and so much pressed with Gnats, and swarms of Flies? But what did *Olympius* answer? And dost thou wonder at this? I tell thee, my Son, all these are but light matters: I count them tolerable, that so I may escape Eternal Torments, which are intolerable. I can endure to be stung by Gnats, that so I may not feel the sting of Conscience, and the gnawing of the Worm that never dieth. This heat which thou so complainest of I can suffer easily, when I think upon the *Eternal Fire* of Hell, which is unsufferable. These troubles, if I may so call them, are but short, and shall have an end; but the Torments in Hell are without end. Whereupon said the other,

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Certainly, *Olympius*, thou art lead by the ſpirit of wiſdom and truth; ſo wiſely and truly haſt thou anſwered. I would there were more of thy mind, that would think thus ſeriouſly upon theſe things; then certainly there would be more than there are now adays, that would after thy Example patiently ſuffer and endure all things.

CHAP. III.

The Concluſion of all.

Zeuxis, the moſt Famous for his Skill amongſt all the Antient Painters that we have heard of, was obſerved to be very ſlow at his Work, and to let no piece of his go abroad into the World to be ſeen of Men, till he had turned it over, and over, this ſide and that ſide, again and again, to ſee if he could ſpy any fault in it: And being upon a time asked the reaſon why he was ſo curious, why ſo long in drawing his Lines, and ſo ſlow in the uſe of his Pencil, he made this anſwer, I am long a doing whatſoever I take in hand, becauſe what I Paint, I Paint for *Eternity*. And thus ſtands the caſe with all, we Paint alſo for *Eternity*. Whatſoever we do, it ſo belongs unto *Eternity*, that a Man may truly ſay of

it thus, I write, I read, I ſing, I pray, I labor, whatſoever I do, whatſoever I ſay, whatſoever I think, all is for *Eternity*. Now if this be the nature of our thoughts, words and deeds, if they ſhall remain *for all Eternity*, we had need have a care what we think, ſpeak or do; it concerns us to look about us, to mind our buſineſs, not to go negligently and ſleepily about our work, not to let any thing go out of our hands rude and imperfect, but to poliſh and perfect it with all the care, skill, and induſtry that we can uſe. We Paint with *Zeuxis* for *Eternity*. When we have done our works, they are preſently tranſmitted to *Eternity*, to be viewed by a moſt judicious and all-ſeeing Eye, that no fault can eſcape; and being viewed and cenſured, they are to be committed either to be Eternally puniſhed, or Eternally rewarded. What I have ſaid before, I here ſay again, becauſe it cannot be ſaid too often, though I ſhould ſay it a thouſand times; whatſoever we think, ſpeak, or do, once thought, ſpoke, or done, it is Eternal, it abideth for ever.

Will you hear what St. *Gregory* ſaith? In all our actions we muſt uſe great care and circumſpection, we muſt well weigh and conſider with our ſelves, what it is that we take in hand, and to what end we

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do it, that our minds be not ſet upon any thing that is *Temporal*, but upon thoſe things which are *Eternal*. Therefore in all thy actions labour to be perfect. Pray for *Eternity*, ſtudy for *Eternity*, ſuffer for *Eternity*, contend for *Eternity*, labour for *Eternity*, So live to God, that thou mayeſt live with God; ſo live on Earth, that thou mayeſt live in Heaven; ſo live for *Eternity*, that thou mayeſt live to *Eternity*.

Hear alſo what St. *Bernard* ſaith. Our works do not paſs away as ſoon as they are done (as they may ſeem to do) but as Seeds ſown in time, they riſe up to all *Eternity*. The fooliſh Man which hath no underſtanding, will wonder to ſee ſuch a plentiful increaſe riſe up of ſuch little Seeds, be it good or be it evil, according to the nature of the Seed which is ſown. But he that is wiſe will ponder theſe things, and count no ſin little: for he hath an eye ſtill not to that which is preſent, but to that which is to come; not to that which is ſown, but to that which is reaped; not to that which is done in time, but to that which remains to all *Eternity*.

Oh the dangerous and miſerable madneſs of the Sons of *Adam*! God created us unto the poſſeſſion of Infinite and Eternal goods: And why are we carried

then with the whole bent of our affections, to those things which are flitting and vanishing? God made us heirs of Heaven and eternal possessions: And why do we so miserably intangle our selves in our vanities, and run headlong to destruction? Let us be wise in time, let us look well to our steps, let us make speed on the way of *Eternity*: Let us so live that we may live to *Eternity*. The way thither is short and narrow, but the term thereof is very large.

But O miserable and foolish Men that we are! We fain would obtain Eternal life, but we are loth to tread in the way that leads to it: We fain would be there; but we will not take pains to go thither. Every Mans desires to be blessed. There is no Man, saith St. *Augustine*, of what condition or degree soever he be, but have a desire after that life which is blessed for ever. Therefore that life is the common Haven at which all Men desire to arrive; but all Men know not how to steer their course aright. It is a thing which all Men without controversie would fain possess; but how to compass it, what course to take, which way to go, that is the point they cannot agree upon. We may seek it long enough upon Earth; and it is a Question, whether we shall ever find it

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or no. Not that I condemn the ſeeking of it, but the not ſeeking of it in the right place. One is of opinion that the Soldiers life is moſt bleſſed. But another denies that, and ſays, the life of the Husbandman is moſt bleſſed. And again, this another denies, and ſays, that the Lawyers life is moſt bleſſed; and he gives his Reaſon for it: For the Lawyer is worſhipped by the People, and is much ſought unto, he is ever taking of Fees, and pleading Cauſes.

And again, this another denies, and ſays, the Judges life is moſt bleſſed: For he hath power of hearing Cauſes, and deciding them. And yet again, another denies this, and ſays, the Merchants life is moſt bleſſed: For he ſees divers Countries, learns many Faſhions, gathers together much Wealth. You ſee, dearly beloved, in ſo many ſeveral kinds of Lives there is not any one to be found, that will pleaſe all. But the Life bleſſed for ever, that is it which pleaſeth all.

Bleſſedneſs therefore is not to be expected here, but is to be ſought for elſewhere, and never to be found out, but by a good and godly Death. Ungodly Men themſelves deſire to die the Death of the Godly, but they will not live the Life of the Godly: For to die well is the way to Felicity; but

to live well is matter of labour; and yet that is not to be obtained without this. *Eternity* depends upon death, and there is no dying well without living well, Chuſe which thou wilt, life or death. If thou liveſt well, thou canſt not but dye well; and it ſhall be well with thee for ever; If thou liveſt not well, thou canſt not hope to die well, but it will be ill with thee for ever.

Not many years ago, a Man of a good Houſe, having more wit in his head, than Religion in his heart, being asked what he thought of the ſtrict lives of the Religious, and the looſe lives of the licentious, which he eſteemed beſt, anſwered thus, I could wiſh to live like the licentious, but to dye like the Religious. Some wit there might be in his anſwer, but I am ſure there was little Religion in it. He had ſpoke like a Chriſtian Man, if he had ſaid thus, I deſire to live the life of the Religious, that my end may be like his. *Balaam* could ſay, *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my laſt end be like his, Numb.* 23. 10. But he had ſaid a great deal better, if he had ſaid thus, *Let me live the life of the Righteous, that I may die the death of the righteous, and that my laſt end may be like his.* For whoſoever liveth the life of the Godly, ſhall be ſure to die the death of the Godly:

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and Citizens, to be for ever incorruptible. Methink I find my mind inflamed and set on Fire, whilst I am speaking of these joys, and methinks it should set on fire all that hear it. Methinks it should so work upon us all, that even now we should most earnestly and ardently desire to be there, where we hope to be for ever hereafter. But thus much we must know, that there is no coming there without much labour. It is not I, but *Paul* the Preacher that saith it, *A Man is not Crowned, except he strive lawfully*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 5. Let then the greatness of the reward encourage us and prick us forward; and let not the labour and pains, the short labour, and the little pains, hinder us or keep us back. We must go on, and we must go on with perseverance; we must not so much consider the roughness of the way, as the blessed *Eternity* which is the end thereof. And this the same holy Father declares most excellently, saying, This is a special Badg and cognizance of the elect, that they know how to carry themselves in the way of this present life in such manner, that by the certainty of hope they are assured, that they have attained unto a great pitch, inasmuch as they see all transitory things far beneath them, and for the love of *Eternity* trample all sublunary things under

der their feet. And this is it which the Lord speaketh by the mouth of his holy Prophet, saying unto every Soul that followeth him, *I will lift thee up above the high places of the Earth.* For as for Losses, Reproaches, Poverty, Disgrace, and such like, these are, as I may so call them, the lower places of the Earth, which the lovers of this World, as they walk through the plain of the broad way, do not love to come near, but keep off as far as is possible. But as for gain and profit, the fawning and flattering of inferiors, abundance of riches, honours, and places of dignity, these are the high places of the earth; which whosoever is worldly-minded, and hath setled his affections on things here below, he, I say, esteemeth highly; because to him they seem great: But whosoever is heavenly-minded, and hath setled his affections on things above, he, I say, esteemeth them not; because to him they seem what they are, that is, vile and base. For as it is with a Man going up a high Mountain, still the higher he goes, the lower he sees the Earth beneath him: So it is with him whose conversation is in Heaven; the higher he mounts from the Earth with the wings of pious Cogitations, the farther he flies from the Earth with the wings of his Affections. He knows that all

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the glory of this World is nothing, and therefore his thoughts and affections are altogether upon another World. This is the Man that is *lifted up above the high places of the Earth.*

You have heard what St. *Gregory* ſaith; It will not be amiſs in the next place to hear likewiſe what St. *Auguſtine* ſaith, What is that? It is a Leſſon worth our learning. That which we muſt loſe, ſaith he, one time or other upon neceſſity, it is wiſdom to diſtribute abroad in time, that we may purchaſe thereby the reward of *Eternity*. *Moſes* lived long indeed, he lived in health; but at length *he died*. *Methuſelah* lived longer than he; but it follows, *And he died*. This is, or ſhall be every mans Epitaph, *Et mortuus eſt, And he died. For we muſt needs die, and are as water ſpilt upon the ground*, 2 *Sam.* 14. 14. But the ſoul is immortal, it is Eternal, it ſhall live for ever, either in *Eternal glory*, or elſe in *Eternal torments*. Here our lot is caſt in which *Eternity* we ſhall have part, and there is no revoking it. Oh bleſſed *Eternity*, Oh *Eternal* bleſſedneſs! How comes it to paſs that ſeldom or never we think upon thee; or if we do at any time, we do it but upon the by? How comes it to paſs,

Deut. 34. 5. *Gen.* 5. 27.

pass, that we do not labour more for thee, that we do not seek for thee, that we are not solicitous for thee. O Lord God, open thou our eyes, that we may see and know what *Eternity* is, both that of glory, and that other of Torment, and how infinite both; how blessed the one, and how miserable the other. Thou hast created us unto thee, thou hast created us unto *Eternity*. For thou art *Eternity*. Thou wouldest have us be partakers of thy *Eternity*; Lord, let it be according to thy Will. Thou hast said it; Lord, let it be according to thy word. Thou hast promised; Lord make good thy promise; Make us partakers of thy *Eternity*. Grant that we may spend the short moment of time granted to us here in this life; Grant, we beseech thee, that we may spend it in such a Religious and Godly manner, as Men that labour for *Eternity*, contend for *Eternity*, suffer for *Eternity*. To this end cause thy Ministers often to call upon us to think still upon *Eternity*; make us call one upon another in every place to think upon *Eternity*, that so by thy mercy we may Reign with thee, O *Eternity*, and as many as it is possible may be kept from perishing everlastingly. Hear this ye *Christians* all, hear it ye *Pagans*, hear it ye *Kings* and *Princes*, hear it ye *Germans*, hear

hear it ye *French*, hear it ye *Engliſh*, yea let all the World hear it. *There can be no ſufficient ſecurity, where there is danger of loſing* Eternity.

Oh long, Oh profound, Oh bottomleſs, Oh Eternal *Eternity! Bleſſed are they, O Lord, that dwell in thy Houſe; they ſhall be ſtil praiſing thee, Pſal.* 84. 4. They ſhall praiſe thee throughout infinite *myriads* of Ages.

Moſes being near unto his death, commending unto God in his Prayers his people *Iſrael*: and bleſſing them, thus took his leave of the Tribe of *Aſher*, and ſaid, *Let Aſher be bleſſed with Children; let him be acceptable to his Brethren, and let him dip his foot in Oyl. Thy ſhoes ſhall be Iron and Braſs; and as thy days, ſo ſhall thy ſtrength be. There is none like unto the God of* Jeſurun, *who rideth upon the Heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the Sky. The Eternal God is the refuge, and underneath are the everlaſting arms, Deut* 33. 24, 25, 26, 27. Thus God ſtretched forth the arms of his power throughout Heaven infinitely: And by his arms all the World, all time, and all things in the World are directed, guided and governed. So God from the beginning, yea, from the *Eternity* of his predeſtination, hath carried in his breaſt all the Godly, and doth protect them

them daily and hourly, and as it were embraceth them with his Arms. Ascend therefore, O my Soul, and have no more to do with Earth and Clay. Stretch forth thy self, and ascend up unto him that rideth upon the Heavens; ascend up unto thy God, whose dwelling is in the highest Mountains, those Mountains of *Eternity*: There shalt thou sit in safety, and behold the Earth beneath: and so shalt thou plainly perceive how little and of none esteem all things are here below, which now either solicite thee with love, or terrifie thee with fear; thou shalt plainly perceive what a small thing it is, whatsoever is *contained* within the *Centre* of the World, that little *Globe* or *point* of Earth; thou shalt plainly perceive *how* that all *things created* are *vain*, *weak*, *short*, *vile*, yea, vanity it self, yea, rather meer nothing in respect of God and of *Eternity*. Therefore seek thou after the only true and soveraign good, and regard not other things. Trust in God, rely on him, open thy heart wide to entertain him; tread under the feet of thy Affections whatsoever is under the Sun and Moon, whatsoever allureth thee with smiles, or terrifieth thee with frowns, think upon *Eternity*, and always keep in mind that excellent saying of St. *Hierome*, no labour must seem hard,

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no time must seem long, all the while we are seeking after Eternal Glory.

It is reported by St. *Hierome*, that there was upon a time a certain Camel haunted by an evil Spirit, which being brought before *Hilarion*, a devout and godly Man, began to rage in such a strange and terrible manner, as if it would presently have devoured him: But the Holy Man nothing afraid, spake thus unto the evil Spirit, Do not think to fright me, thou evil Spirit, although that thou hast got a Camel on thy back; it is all one to me whether thou comest in a Camels skin, or in a Foxes skin: And presently the fierce Camel fell down before him, and became very tame and gentle, to the great laughter of all those that stood by. Such are all flatteries, fawnings, allurements, and tentations of this World; such are all fears, frowns, frights, and terrors. What dost thou hope for? What dost thou fear? What dost thou love? He that rideth upon the Heavens is thy helper; he shall embrace thee with his everlasting arms. With those arms of his he is able to fetter all thine Enemies, whether they fawn or frown upon thee; he is able at a beck to squeeze them in pieces like so many Flies, and break them in pieces like a Potters Vessel. Doth the pleasure then of lust,

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or gluttony, or intemperance sollicite thee? That is nothing: Be not moved at it, pass it by, regard it not; think rather upon the pleasures which are Eternal. Art thou terrified with threats, oppressed with sorrows, passed by with contempt, afflicted with sickness, tired out with poverty? All these are a matter of nothing. The more violent these are, the shorter while they will last: Despise them, lift up thine eyes unto the Hills, from whence cometh thy help, look up to Heaven, *think upon Eternity, There shall no evil happen unto the just, Prov.* 2. 21.

Horat. Carm. lib. 3. *Od.* 3.

Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.

The just Man shall not be afraid,
Though Heaven fall upon his head.

Therefore the just Man is never sorrowful: no tribulation doth ever assault him. But are not the tribulations of the just many? Yea, but yet they make nothing of them. That only they count evil which is Eternal, which separateth a Man from God, as sin doth, and eternal death which is the wages of sin. The Preacher of the Gentiles bids us *Look not at things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.*

ſeen. Why ſo? For ſaith he, *The things which are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are Eternal.* The things which are not ſeen, the things which are Eternal, thoſe are the things which are great indeed, whether they be good, or whether they be evil.

But whilſt we look only at the things which are ſeen, and ſeldom or never at the things which are not ſeen, what do we make of our ſelves but great and fooliſh Boys? Great, but yet fooliſh; at the beſt but Boys. If the Ice fall out of our hands, we preſently fall a crying, and yet that is ſuch a thing that we cannot hold long: We are frighted at ſhadows, and dream of great matters; we ſpend our ſelves on ſuch things, as not only ſhall ſhortly paſs away for certain, but are already paſſing away: For it is not ſaid, *The figure* or *the faſhion of this World ſhall paſs away*, in the *Future*: 1 *Cor.* 7. 31. But, *The faſhion of this World paſſeth away*, in the *Preſent*. It is paſſing away already, As all the goods which we enjoy here are but tranſitory, ſo all the evils which we ſuffer here are but tranſitory; that cannot continue long. Thoſe things which are not ſeen, and thoſe only have a permanent ſtate, they know no end, they have no term, they are not ſubject to any change, they are

are firm, they are immoveable, they are Eternal. I repeat it again, what I said a little before, for it deserves to be repeated a thousand and a thousand times; no labour must seem hard, no time must seem long, all the while we are seeking after Eternal Glory.

Symphorianus, a Christian young Man, after that he was almost scourged to death, as he was dragged to Execution at *Augustodunum*, met his Mother upon the way; But how? Not tearing the hair from her head, or rending her Clothes, or laying open her Breasts, or making grievous lamentations, as the manner of foolish women is to do: But carrying her self like an Hercical and Christian Lady. For she cried out, and called unto her Son, and said, *Son, my Son, I say, remember life Eternal, look up to Heaven, lift up thine eyes to him that reigneth there. Life is not taken from thee, but is exchanged for a better.* At which words of his Mother, the young Man was so exceedingly animated, that he went willingly to Execution, and chearfully like a stout Champion laid down his head upon the block, and exposed his throat to the fatal Ax.

Hear this, O Christians all, and remember your selves. This is the case of every Man living; we are on our way to death;

Death; we go not ſo faſt, it may be, as *Symphorianus* did; but yet we are all going, and we have not far to go. The Noble Armies of Martyrs which are gone before us, they call unto us from Heaven, and ſay as the Chriſtian and couragious Mother ſaid unto her Son, as he was going to Execution, *Remember Life Eternal, look up to Heaven, and lift up your Eyes to him that reigneth there.* Carry thy ſelf therefore like a *Symphorian*, whoſoever profeſſeſt thy ſelf to be a Chriſtian. Do not hang back, be not loth to go, withdraw not thy neck from the Yoke, nor thy ſhoulders from the Croſs; be not afraid to ſuffer for Chriſt; be not afraid to die for Chriſt; be not afraid to eat Fire, or to devour the Sword for the Name of Chriſt. Here ſhew thy ſelf a Man, take good Courage, pull up a good Heart. And when thou art at any time tempted, when thou art grieved, when thou art made ſorrowful, when thou art vexed, when thou art deſpiſed, when thou art made a laughing-ſtock, when thou art diſgraced, when thou art ſpoiled of thy Goods, when it is with thee as it was with *Job* upon the Dunghil, or, if it can be worſe, then call to mind *Symphorian*, and a thouſand more ſtout Chriſtians ſuch as he was, and learn of them Chriſtian Courage and Magnanimity,

and boldly and freely break forth into these words, and repeat them often: Whatsoever I suffer here, is but a *Modicum*, it is but short. Farewel then all the World, and all the things that are therein: And welcome to me, thou art welcome, ETERNITY.

Of *Eternity* there is no

FINIS.

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